Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE BARONY.

VOL. III.

Digitized by Google

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New Street-Square.

Digitized by Google

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

THE BARONY.

BY

MISS ANNA MARIA PORTER.

Let your great name be herald of great deeds:
Else is its sound but like the trumpet's blast;
Which calling eager crowds to meet a prince,
Presents, instead, some wandering mountebank.
MS. Play.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1830.

Digitized by Google

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

955
P844
b.
V. 3

Digitized by Google

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

THE BARONY.

CHAP. I.

AFTER that passionate burst to her cousin, in which she bravely taxed him with his perfidy, Miss Trevanion would have sunk back into her former statue-like state of bodily and mental torpor, had not her judicious Susannah, from time to time, repeated those parts of old Walter's discourse which were calculated to keep the hope faintly alive, of Arundell's absence from Monmouth's enterprise.

Such a notion was prevalent amongst the common people; but not one of them would say upon what grounds: since, in truth, each individual knew it solely from some unlucky relation whom they had helped privily away; and whose complaints of having been cheated into following a noble

645197

Digitized by Google

gentleman, that was never heard of in the rebel camp, might not even be breathed to a third person, without risk of the speaker's life.

Thus nothing beyond assertions, seemingly groundless, floated around Treverderet respecting its heir: but Susannah ceased not to repeat them by way of cheering her sad lady; whilst, at the same time, she pressed her, with respectful arguments, on the score of her duties to herself and others.

Miss Trevanion was more easily made to acknowledge, than to perform these. The fashion of the times, however, exacting their strict execution from all well-ordered mistresses, and her father's change of habits requiring the exercise of housemanagement to a much greater extent than formerly, she was obliged at last to break up the depths of her thoughts, and direct them to a variety of ordinary, yet needful matters.

Sir Fulk had proposed reopening his gates to his neighbours, by a general entertainment; for which much preparation was necessary. And though his daughter was pronounced incapable of going through the

Digitized by Google

fatigue of doing the honours upon this occasion, she was forced to find strength and consideration for issuing orders, and seeing them obeyed.

This expected house-opening was understood to be given in honour of Colonel Trevanion's return to parliament; an event which had just taken place by the concerted retirement of a member sitting for an open borough, in which the Trevanion interest had so invariably foiled that of Lord Carraton.

Colonel Trevanion himself, modestly as it seemed, contradicted the report; ascribing the reopening of Treverderet to his uncle's desire of showing that his secession from public life, during the late reign, had been to mark his just resentment against the sovereign who had done him such a wrong as permitting sentence to be passed in the matter of the Chascawen Barony upon inconclusive grounds. That he came forward now, as an active country gentleman, to prove both his willingness to be useful, and to mark his entire confidence in the new king. The artful orator took care to impress his hearers with an idea of Sir Fulk's intention to try the great cause over;

Digitized by Google

again; and thus sowed the seed of a report which at length grew into an expectation, and in that shape continually met the notice of the knight wherever he turned.

From the moment Colonel Trevanion reached Treverderet his purpose was fixed, of speeding on his settlement in the heirship, by every engine in his power. One of these was, effacing, if possible, by his merits, the memory of his cousin's. No one indeed could court popularity more artfully, or practise the tricks of conciliation with a better grace than he did. He went about amongst the gentry, with that mask of thoughtless good humour, that readiness to meet reproof for small as for great levities, which at once disarmed displeasure and bespoke indulgence. The grave heads of families began to think, that if his political principles were too much inclined towards court measures, it was only because he had not yet taken time to study the true interests of his country; that, perhaps, the glory and gratification of teaching him how to fill worthily the high post of a British representative might be the lot of one of them. Thus the elder men were emulous of tutoring him upon national objects, —

Digitized by Google

the younger enjoyed his companionship in their sports, exercises, and pleasures; for Dunbar's habits imposed no restraints; and many a prudent mother, foreseeing an end to the rumoured match between him and his moping cousin, winked at her daughter's anxiety for attracting his attention.

The heir of Rohesia disgracefully disposed of, there was, in fact, no other young unmarried man of such prospects as Colonel Trevanion. A specious show of prosperity was thrown over his uncle's fortune at present: part of the money Sir Fulk had raised from the felling of timber, and the sale of his deer, was pompously returned from the treasury, after the quick extinction of civil war; the official post bestowed upon him had a fine income attached to it; and the marked favour of the reigning monarch held out numberless brilliant perspectives to himself and his successors.

Dunbar failed not to pamper his uncle's passion for consequence, by exaggerating, not only the state of depreciation into which the rival family had fallen, but the confident expectation of the barony's restoration to its rightful owner, provided the

Digitized by Google

injured person would take courage, and try the cause again, even upon the old ground.

The effect of such subtle representations may be imagined: Sir Fulk felt his honour almost engaged to renew the contest; and it was to this point Dunbar sought to draw him; trusting that certain terms would then bind him to certain sacrifices, which would at once ensure the heirship to his nephew, let what would arise afterwards; and set the latter free from the hated engagement to marry his cousin.

At present, Dunbar had little to fight against: the unhappy Aura was contented to shun him, under cover of her dispiriting illness; so that his distance from her, when they met now and then at meals, or in the sunny arbour of the winter garden, appeared only like very respectful concern, and remained, as yet, unquestioned by her father. Sir Fulk himself was walking in a state of unnatural excitement. The distempered desire of appearing unmoved by the outlawry of a discarded son, buoyed him up to a monstrous height; yet this could not long uphold him, and certainly would soon have failed, had not new matter, to

Digitized by Google

inflame his passions and minister to his vain hopes, have been furnished.

Well aware of this necessity, Dunbar contrived, covertly, to remind him, from time to time, that Arundell's share in the late rebellion, and close connection with Lord Argyll, had obliged the king to slacken the haste with which he was proceeding to bring the matter of the barony forward before his council; thus invariably coupling the image of his absent son with irritating and humiliating feelings; making it impossible for him to forget how much of family honours had been squandered by one degenerate, as he deemed it, from family character.

To quell the hot anguish of such thoughts Sir Fulk gave himself with no small degree of ardour to the duties of his place, and of hospitality. He was gratified by the numerous attendance on his first great entertainment, which a general invitation to the gentlemen of the duchy had produced. His halls were crowded with themselves and their retainers; and once more the ivied walls of the old house shook with the sounds of decent mirth and honest rejoicing. Colonel Trevanion went his rounds from the

Digitized by Google

banquet of the landlords to the feast of their tenants;—he gave loyal and patriotic toasts;— shook hands with his inferiors,— gracefully saluted their wives, — and sung, with a light grace all his own, snatches of popular songs, glass in hand, by their side.

But some smiles were hollow there;— some hearts heavy;—some thoughts far away with the banished and rightful heir. One eye was raining down tears, and that was in a distant chamber; — the weeper was poor Aura. Sir Fulk himself only played the part of cheerful courtesy; but he was self-condemned to it, and proud dedetermination enabled him to carry it through. The servants, who remembered Arundell, moved about in silent seriousness; those who did not, wore joyous looks. The night was far spent before the entertainment ended.

The fatigue of previous preparations for this numerous company had worn out Miss Trevanion's small stock of strength before their assembling commenced; and afterwards the sounds of merry-making from hall and kitchen, not only pierced her to the heart whilst she was up, but prepared her a sleepless pillow when she retired to rest.

Digitized by Google

When her father came, therefore, to see her late on the following morning, he found her reduced again to that state of miserable depression which seems to put the sufferer equally beyond the reach of reasoning and reproof. He, too, had lain on a bed of thorns; and softened towards her excessive dejection by his own reflections, had come in a disposition to handle her heart's wound tenderly.

Instead, therefore, of severely reproving or coldly disregarding her evident abandonment to revived misery, he tried to interest her by some details of the preceding evening; selecting such as were most likely to please that family pride which was, in truth, latent in her breast; and reminding her, that until she could make an effort to appear at the head of her father's table, he must be denied the pleasing society of ladies. Seeing these topics failed to bring a single gleam of pleasure into her eyes, he altered his tone, and urged her to say, if there were any change of place she could fancy,—any amusement likely to raise her broken spirits,—any gratification in his power to bestow, that might restore her to some interest in life.

Digitized by Google

Miss Trevanion at first answered only by oppressive sighs; her eyes glazing with tears, till their moisture brimmed through the thick dark lashes that seemed longer and darker than ever, from their contrast with the pale cheek upon which they rested: but at length awakened to a faint hope of the only possible good she had often wished for, yet still despairingly, she answered in a low voice, "that from her incapacity of entertaining new acquaintance, as most of the Cornish ladies were to her, she had small means of distracting her thoughts; that she missed the occasional meetings with her early friend Miss Hungerford, which she used to have when her strength enabled her to walk far enough; and she thought if she might be allowed to receive her at Treverderet——"

Sir Fulk withdrew his hand from its resting-place on her chair, and looking earnestly on her, said, with a changed countenance, — "This is somewhat bold, Aura! Do you and this young gentlewoman carry on any sort of correspondence then?"

"None, sir," Miss Trevanion replied, rather proudly; "I never had your warrant for it."

"Good!" responded the knight; then

Digitized by Google

in a cheerfuller tone, "methinks it were fair huckstering to drive a bargain with you now, and to see whether your starving coyness to a certain worthy suitor for your favour may not be bought off by your father's sacrifice of his private feelings. It was my resolution never to admit a Hungerford under my roof—" Here he paused.

Miss Trevanion's raised complexion sunk at once; too well aware of what her father meant, she did not speak. She had more than once since her return home met the stern rebuke of his eye at her hasty avoidance of her cousin's assiduities, and she had not courage at this critical moment to dare the question of what he wished her to do. Sir Fulk stood regarding her altered appearance for a few seconds in silence; then hemming away either a sigh or an angry burst — poor Aura guessed not which — suddenly left her.

And where was Colonel Trevanion before, and during this scene between the father and daughter? part of the foregoing time he had vainly given to one of his many attempts at fathoming Mr. Becket, and of cautiously awakening vanity or ambition in Susannah Hollis. Colonel Trevanion was deeply

Digitized by Google

skilled in the art of making a woman understand that he admired her, whilst yet he never committed himself by aught that could attract another's attention, or, if repeated, could be brought in evidence against him. He played this against the blooming attendant of his cousin, solely to find out the extent of her lady's confidence in her, and the nature of that confidence. It imported him to know by whose agency his cousin had made her discoveries of his perfidy and secret link with the popish party. Susannah, however, was too right-minded for such artifice to work its purpose: she disdained him for his admiration, aware that it ought to be her lady's right, if he were sincere as a suitor; and she showed this so strongly by her manner, that his pride became too much irritated for a continuance of smooth professions, and offers of promoting her brother in his regiment, provided she wished her brother such exaltation.

Mr. Becket, too, baffled him by the simple operation of praying off his honouring notice; declaring, that after Miss Trevanion's grievous accusation of him, the secretary, when he merely obeyed the co-

Digitized by Google

lonel's desire, and showed her the letter writ to him from the camp, it had been his chief study to stear clear of such suspicion in future, by making intimate with no one under his venerated master's roof; therefore, as his humble object was to live in peace, intermeddling with no one's concerns, he trusted the noble colonel would pardon him for relinquishing all private discourse with him, though but on matters indifferent.

Dunbar had pretty well satisfied himself of Becket's exclusion from his fair cousin's councils, but he was not quite sure that the smooth-phrased secretary had no secrets of his own. In such stirring times as those they lived in, when place and profit were the rewards of active agency in the service of the church of Rome, it appeared impossible to such a man as Dunbar that any popish scholar should really be contented with so drowsy a state as mediocrity of station and an uneventful existence; and resolving still to keep his eye upon him, he took his gun and went out with the intent of joining a party of sportsmen on the moors.

As he was trampling through the fern of a patch of waste close to the cottage of

Digitized by Google

Hollis's mother, he stayed his progress to catch the last sentences of a speech, addressed by the dame to pretty Mrs. Damaris, as they were parting.

"Prithee, dontee fail, good Mrs. Flavel," were the words, "to give my bounden thanks to your worshipful lady for her great offers; but we maunt think o'em. I hope to live and die on his honour's land, who gave us a home here when we had not so much as a byre of our own to sleep in; so no more speech of the matter, except my dutiful thanks — and my poor useless girl's yonder — and my son's, when he comes to hear of it. Oh, Mrs. Damaris, I fear me it will be a sore temptation to him, thinking of you — as I tell him, doesn't become such on a one as him, poor boy! — however, God will give him grace, I hope, to over-master it." And with that simple expression of plain Christian fidelity, content to give up every worldly advantage which must be gained by acting ungratefully, Dame Hollis courteously opened her little wicket, standing until the courtesying and sighing Mrs. Damaris issued from the thick shade of hazels in which it was bedded.

Dunbar Trevanion held back while these

Digitized by Google

courtesies were exchanging; but no sooner was Damaris on her way homeward, than leaping a fence on one side, he cut across a slip of ploughed ground, which brought him immediately in front of her advance.

It was not the first time Mrs. Damaris had seen Colonel Trevanion since her fearful dialogue with him under old Cary's roof; but it was the first on which she had met him alone: and at sight of his well-made person and handsome face, although he saluted her with a smiling waving of his feathered hat, she recoiled in dismay.

An instant only was required for such an adroit general as Dunbar, to settle his plan of attack. To have made love to one so silly and vain as he fairly judged poor Damaris to be, from her yet unconquered passion for finery, would subject him to inconvenient suspicion, or scandal in consequence of her probable boasts, and might attract to him no very lucky notice from her admirer Hollis. He determined, therefore, once more to work upon her fears; and with this view challenged her acquaintance, by hoping that none of her friends had suffered from the severities exercising against the principals and abettors of the late rebellion.

Digitized by Google

Damaris, with the face of a sheeted ghost, inarticularly replied in the negative; then bursting into tears as she looked hastily all round, with more convulsion of voice begged to know if the papers his honour knew of, were really all burned? for she dreamt of them almost every night; and was sure she had seen the apparition of the poor gentleman that gave them to her, and heard him ask her why she had not taken them to the person he had named? She wished she could get those papers out of the flames, for she began to think she should never be happy again all her life long, for not having kept her promise.

Alarmed at her distempered manner—for in truth, terror, whenever she thought of the subject, nearly turned poor Damaris's brain — Dunbar employed his best arts of poignant raillery, to appease her conscience, and persuade her that an unreasonable ghost was no more to be treated with complaisance, than a living impertinent; and that, consequently, the shade of Lord Gray de Wark could not expect attention to his most ungallant complaints. With better assumed gravity, he added to this lightness, that knowing herself to have acted like a good

Digitized by Google

protestant, and a loyal subject, she must be sure of heavenly protection; and need not fear a spirit come from the devil, assuredly upon some devilish errand. He talked much profane nonsense, in the garb of sense, about the temptations of saints, their triumph over the evil one, and winding all up by maintaining the treasonable nature of the papers committed to her charge; added, that even now, were it only suspected by Judge Jefferies, that she had ever held converse with Lord Gray, no power on earth, not even Lord Carraton's, could save her from the gallows.

To this awful denunciation, the hypocrite added a strenuous recommendation to her to be circumspect in her intimates; condescending to warn her of danger from the first indiscreet word she might let fall, since an informer's now was a profitable trade; and there were a few such strict persons in the neighbourhood as his uncle's servants, the Hollis's, who, putting their duty to the king out of the question, would hold themselves bound to report suspicious circumstances to their feudal lord, even of their dearest relative.

Damaris became so agitated and bewil-

Digitized by Google

dered by this unexpected view of danger, where she was contemplating her happiest prospects, that Colonel Trevanion easily drew from her a confession of the embassy upon which she had been to Dame Hollis; and divining the trembling girl's yet unconfessed affection for his former soldier, merrily jested her upon it, and promised her his good offices with his uncle at some period more prosperous than the present. He assured her that just now, the knight's mind was too sore upon the subject of private griefs, originating in the Rohesian family, to bear the slightest mention of any such connection for a dependant of his; but that the time was not far distant when he, the colonel, in pure good nature towards her, and sincere value for the fine fellow Frank, doubted not obtaining what he was sure she wished.

Damaris, of course, according to the miserable practice of her sex in general, believed herself obliged to deny the fact of loving a worthy man; and Colonel Trevanion, therefore, was better able to push the real object of his curiosity, by affecting to credit her; consequently, might well enquire what other motive than forwarding

Digitized by Google

her favorite abigail's happiness could prompt Miss Hungerford's large offers to the humble tenants of his uncle?

Had Damaris known the mixed motives of her lady, she would certainly have been beguiled into telling them; but, entirely unsuspicious of the latter's attraction to the Treverderet family, she foiled Dunbar by merely maintaining, with truth, that she knew of no other reason her lady had, but good will to Master Hollis for having charged himself with the care of Damaris when she was in her distress.

Finding he could get no more out of her, Colonel Trevanion once more advised her to forget that she had ever conversed with those dangerous persons, the old Cary's; after which he bade her good day, with that mixture of gallantry and lordliness which he well knew how to throw into his manner with inferiors of the gentler sex.

There was something so suspicious to him in Miss Hungerford's generosity, and his cousin Aura's power of getting at his secrets, was so wholly unexplained, that in trying to solve the enigma of both, he abruptly turned homewards, caring no longer for the shooting party on the moors.

Digitized by Google

Dunbar's way leading him through that quarter of his uncle's domains after he had crossed the park, to avoid a very hot autumn sun, he chose to walk under the impenetrable shade of the cedars, upon the terrace so often haunted by his cousin in days past. The glimpse of white drapery made him bound up the steps with agile swiftness: he gained the height, and saw the boughs of the trees beyond, swinging back from their forcible separation, by some one that had sprang through them, but who was now no longer visible.

Dunbar paused for a moment, quite lost in a confusion of unpleasant surprise: he felt assured, by the lightness of the drapery, by the rapid flight—nay, by the very boldness of the act itself, that it must have been Miss Hungerford. She, who was known at court, by the title of their "Atalanta," was well qualified to appear and disappear thus, like a flash of lightning. She could only have come hither in quest of Aura. They were in correspondence then!

Be villainy as successful as it may, a time comes, sooner or later, when it pays at least the penalty of a deadly panic: this was the case with Dunbar Trevanion now: a single

Digitized by Google

instant sufficed to show him the perils which might be round him, provided Miss Hungerford, whose connections enabled her to get at every court or cabinet intrigue, at home and abroad, was employed by his reserved cousin to fathom his proceedings, and throw light upon Arundell's history! He had formerly suspected something of this, but afterwards dismissed the thought: now it was demonstrated to him by what he saw at present, and what he had just been endeavouring to sift from Damaris Flavel. *Were they, then, or were they not,* in regular correspondence? was Damaris the bearer of letters to his cousin, through the Hollis's? or did Miss Hungerford come like a romantic lover into his uncle's grounds by night, and be admitted to her sick and sorrowful friend's apartment? had this concealed intimacy subsisted when he first suspected it? unless it had, Aura, in London, could not have acquired the knowledge she had done of his treachery concerning Philips, nor, indeed, have learned any of those other particulars which she had so passionately vented upon him in their first private meeting since? Could Lord Villiers have been a party to the

Digitized by Google

thing? was Susannah Hollis a sharer in the game? if so, what a formidable coalition! How was he to escape its threatened ruin?

Dunbar knew, too well, how much he had done to bar his injured cousin from returning to his home: more, far more, than even his great arts had got him warrant for, from his absurd uncle. He quailed, therefore, at the possibility of its discovery through Miss Hungerford's agency; and thinking principally of the fact Damaris Flavel might bring against him, betook himself to imagine the best mode of weakening her evidence, should it ever be brought forward to his uncle.

In the very depth of these meditations he found himself all at once under the spreading chesnuts by the river side, and in front of his uncle, who was taking there his solitary walk, with an open letter in his hand, and a dark cloud on his brow. A momentary palpitation of heart in him, was ended by Sir Fulk's salutation, which was only charactered by that cold gravity which marked every thing he did when suffering from galled pride. The knight certainly found himself in a sort of court yoke at the instant; but he refused to confess such an

Digitized by Google

unwelcome feeling; and affecting serious satisfaction, he told his nephew to read the letter he held out. With a profusion of humble thanks, Dunbar took and perused the epistle.

It came from one of the king's confidential persons, and was avowedly of his dictation. The first sentence congratulated the knight upon his worthy nephew's distinguished loyalty and bravery during the late civil broil, and upon his nomination to parliament. The second, condoled with him upon the continued sickness of his daughter, which seemed fated to throw a serious obstacle in the way of the union, which his majesty himself had once suggested. That royal personage condescended to intimate, that in consequence of this expected match being so long deferred, malignant whisperers had endeavoured to poison his august mind, with doubts of Sir Fulk Trevanion's sincere intention to support his throne against the party abroad, who were seeking to undermine it. He further said, that as the surest way of putting these whisperers to shame, it would be well, if the young lady's health were really in so sad a state, to look out for another wife for his nephew,

Digitized by Google

so that the honourable house of Treverderet might not perish in the persons of the present noble knight, and his declared heir, Colonel Dunbar Trevanion; the king would then have fair grounds for conquering the opposition of certain in his privy council, who were against the revision of the sentence about the barony, solely from their hostility to the principles of his misguided son, whose issue might eventually succeed to power and wealth in England, unless Sir Fulk should make the due settlement of his estate, and match his nephew where there was a likelihood of offspring.

When Colonel Trevanion had finished a second perusal of this courteous, yet dictatorial letter, he folded it, and stood with an air of silent respect always flattering to his kinsman, as if presuming not to offer an opinion.

As usual, the latter spoke first; though now with some effort at appearing unembarrassed.

"His majesty's wise providence for the security of his throne, by binding up again the ancient and loyal houses that have somewhat fallen into decay and ruin, by dutiful services for his murdered grandfather, de-

Digitized by Google

serves much commendation: and his especial care for the restoration of the Trevanions to their just rights, meriteth from us that we should be guided partly by his good counsel. I, therefore, do mean, nephew, to take the king's advice."

"In how great extent, may I humbly crave to know?" was Dunbar's modest question.

"Why, if Aura continueth in this lifeless state—which, in truth, grievous disgraces have brought her to—or doth heartily distaste wedlock, I will resign my own natural desire to see her so wedded, and will cast about to find you another wife. Could you guide me to any family of high descent, and answerable reputation, which have fair and well-nurtured daughters?"

Colonel Trevanion hastened to say, and to swear, with a vehement ardour, inspired by his secret joy, that he had never given thought to any other woman than his fair cousin; but that sadly suspicious of her desire to lead a single life, he had long kept his passion so far in abeyance, as would enable him at any time to obey his honoured kinsman's commands, whenever they might point him to a match fit for a Trevanion.

Digitized by Google

"It is well said!" responded the knight. "Now I will tell you what had passed between me and my poor child, just before this letter came to hand. Methinks, if rightly managed, it may prove serviceable to my wishes in the matter of her recovery."

Sir Fulk then proceeded briefly to relate as much of his late discourse with Miss Trevanion as he chose to detail; together with his purpose of trying the experiment upon her sick humour of her old schoolfellow's society. This failing, he concluded, he would directly proclaim Dunbar his heir; seek out a wife for him; make due provision for Aura; and, finally, fix the succession to Treverderet, by executing a legal instrument to that effect, before his nephew's marriage settlements were drawn out.

So great a thunderclap as this, of hearing that the doors of Treverderet were about to open for persons plotting his ruin, astounded Colonel Trevanion so beyond all compass of his wit, that he lost sight of what he ought to have seen and acknowledged, his uncle's intention of adopting him, and ejaculated, unconsciously, "Admit a Hungerford, sir!"

Digitized by Google

"Yes, truly!" returned Sir Fulk, in a colder tone; for he relished not the implied rebuke of this amazement. "Is there aught to marvel at in my giving a sick child her fancy? A young gentlewoman will not rival you!"

"How soon you detect the infirm humours of such witless folk as myself!" ejaculated Dunbar, adroitly, ready to give another colour to his evident disturbance. "If Aura will not smile at my poor attempts to amuse away her sad moods, it should not matter to me, whether it were bold suitor, or fair friend, that have that happy hap."

"Come, come, kinsman," interrupted his uncle, with instant graciousness, "I see whither your thoughts point. But you must abide this heart-sickness in my poor daughter: it is a disease cruelly gotten in sad truth; and if giving way to her sickly longing for the gossip of an old playmate may help to lure her out of it, you will be the first to thank me for having done so." He paused — then added, in a graver tone: "When I have given this way to Aura's weakness, even should it fail to bring her out of her distemperature of spirit (and worse

Digitized by Google

cannot come of it), I shall at least have earned undisputed right to dispose of these lands as it shall seem likeliest to ensure perpetuity to the name and honours of Trevanion."

"Oh, sir! speak not of such disposal with reference to me!" exclaimed Dunbar, with well-acted passionateness. "Dare I presume to entreat that no threat of such a nature may be used to work upon my cousin! You know what it is to love delicately!—I own my particular infirmity of jealousy, and were I not sure of being preferred—"

"Tut! foolish boy—must you be wooed instead of the lady! What needeth more proof of a modest gentlewoman's affection than her taking you for her master?"

"Smile as you please at me, honoured sir!" replied the subtle wretch, with his most winning air of frank indiscretion. "But to such grievous extent goeth my jealous humour, that I remember when Aura first saw the Lord Villiers, and praised his exceeding comeliness, I was ready to thrust my dagger through him."

"The Lord Villiers!" repeated Sir Fulk, in a tone that proved how surely this light shaft had lodged.

Digitized by Google

"Nay, dearest uncle," Dunbar hastened to say, as if in kindly zeal—"my fair cousin is not to blame for seeing goodly proportions, since she is blessed with eye-sight: she was chafed at herself for having noticed them, however, when I told her the name of him to whom they belonged. I merely quoted this, to show how needful it is for such a self-misgiving graceless as your nephew, to be sure he is preferred when he weds."

"You shall take your pleasure in the matter," was the knight's grave and somewhat stately reply. "I would match you to my daughter, for your happiness as well as honour, good nephew; and I would give her a loving kinsman for a protector, to ease certain infirm mislikings within me, of—but let them pass—" he paused, then abruptly added—"If Aura's seeing this court gentlewoman causes your fantastical brain to shape out any jealousies—it need not be."

Colonel Trevanion lost not a moment in deprecating any change of his uncle's amiable purposes. He was urged to this by the following considerations:—It was plain that his cousin and Miss Hungerford

Digitized by Google

already communicated privily: nameless mischiefs might be plotting against him — a train might even then be laid, and the mine sprung under his feet, at the very moment when he was most secure in idea. If, then, private interviews could be done away with, and Miss Hungerford have open egress to his cousin, he would be enabled to watch their movements and stand on the defensive. He knew himself perfect in the art of warding off suspicion and palsying coming accusations, by insinuating prejudices against the motives of the accusers, ere they made their charges. He thought, therefore, that if Miss Hungerford and Aura were obliged to stand in the light of other's presence, he should see far enough into their designs, to guard against whatever attack they might jointly meditate upon his character, and footing with his uncle.

In this spirit he now affected to plead disinterestedly for his cousin's gratification; adding that he believed the young lady in question, was as amiable as she was said to be shrewd and pleasant.

"But fear you not, sir," he asked, with his best air of pleasantry, "that the restless wit of Lady Rhoda will go to work directly

Digitized by Google

after this upon your honourable self? I would hazard, if I had any worth staking, all my worldly goods upon the wager of her scheming to bestow her fair niece either upon the noble knight of Treverderet himself, or upon his lack-land nephew, by way of soldering up a peace between our houses, now theirs is about to tumble down."

"I care not for Lady Rhoda Brandon's petty practices," returned Sir Fulk, smiling loftily, "so that the young lady does not come, either as a negociator or a spy. In truth, I would not do my daughter's schoolmate the dishonour of suspecting that she would come upon a base or bold errand. She must know that I am only to be *entrapped* into a truce with her kinsman. War, endless war, between the lion and the fox."

"Why, truly," observed Dunbar, "if the Rohesian people wanted but to pry into our household histories, they might easier get at it. I see that mincing waiting-woman belonging to Miss Hungerford, whom you mistook for a court lady at church on Sunday, has found her way into Dame Hollis's cottage; I saw her coming out thence but now, with all the airs of patronage. I hope

Digitized by Google

the simple dame sends her away sick with hearing of our scorn of their fine—"

"Ha!" interrupted the knight, his irritable nature catching fire at this unpermitted impertinence, as he termed it: "that should not be! I allow of no intimacies between my people and those of Lord Carraton. I choose it not. See that the Hollises are warned to drop such idle acquaintance."

Colonel Trevanion promised obedience; adding some conciliatory words in favour of Dame Hollis's harmless intention, and some adroit ones to prove that the Rohesian family were assuredly striving, by various ways, to compass amity with that of Treverderet.

Any allusion to his superiority over Lord Carraton was a chord which, when rightly struck, always vibrated proud music in the heart of Sir Fulk Trevanion; and for some time the uncle and nephew continued walking slowly onward, the one applying subtle stimulants to exulting hate, the other rapidly rising into higher contempt for a supposed humbled foe.

Colonel Trevanion's triumphant belief of having secured himself from the danger of unseen machinations was unexpectedly

Digitized by Google

checked, when he casually gathered from his uncle, that as he meant to leave his daughter free to receive Miss Hungerford privately, not publicly amongst other visitors, and chose not to take any share in the acquaintance; they might conduct it how they chose, so it were done with discretion, and their companionship confined to Miss Trevanion's quarter of Treverderet. He should take care, he said, to avoid encountering them together: and Dunbar, from the same lofty determination to ward off any overtures of peace from the elders of the Rohesian family, was admonished to do the same. This refusal of all surveillance over the meetings of the two young ladies, was almost a mortal blow to Colonel Trevanion; it left him, just where the first announcement of the plan had found him — again exposed to under-ground plots. Not daring to make open head against this purpose of his uncle, he contrived to marshal the reasons opposed to such implicit reliance upon the discretion of one party and the sincere friendship of the other, in a manner to rouse Sir Fulk's apprehension of really being too trustful, yet to give himself the appearance of contemning them as being

Digitized by Google

too cold-blooded for generous souls to entertain. Dunbar knew that, although false shame ever prevented his proud relative from acting upon a conviction wrought in him by another, the objections he had just stated would abide and rankle in his thoughts, and so prepare him to receive hereafter whatever impression of its mischievousness the colonel might see it wise to charge upon this excess of paternal confidence.

His own game now lay in expressing his entire belief that his cousin Aura required no watching to keep the guard of a proper reserve over family secrets, and make her avoid those descriptions of domestic heart-burnings which most young ladies love to vent to their confidants. Nay, so much did he profess satisfied of this, that he offered to bear all the blame, if she falsified this opinion of his in the slightest degree; or if the young person she had selected as a friend, should make so ungrateful a return for Sir Fulk's goodness, as to sow dissensions, instead of assisting to bind the peace of the family, by inclining Aura to think of her cousin as a husband.

By such vehement declarations Dunbar

Digitized by Google

provided in some degree against a danger he could not wholly avert. If Miss Hungerford were intermeddling with the intricate business of Arundell Trevanion's exile and disgrace,—which he shrewdly suspected,—whatever steps she might take to bring the villany of it to the light, would come under the head of such mischief-making and impertinence as he had declaimed against, and matched to his seeming thoughtlessness of harm from her, must weigh strongly in his favour at last.

"*If such is thy judgment of these romantic maidens,*" rejoined the knight fretfully, for his mood was already jarred, "be not slack to press thy suit with Aura; and let me hear no more of such ribald Adonises as the Lord Villiers, exciting your jealousy. Thou must have been mad to have seen aught but abhorrence in her, when she encountered him and his godless crew at Richmond!"

"I own it, I own it," repeated Dunbar, bowing hat, head, and body to the very dust, with no ungraceful air of self-humiliation. "But I was stung afterwards by having noted the wanton gallant sundry times pacing nearer my fair cousin's win-

Digitized by Google

dow in town than a peppery fellow like myself cared to think of. When I cooled, I knew it was only Aura's rosy serving-wench that he came questing after."

"What! Susannah Hollis?" said the knight of Treverderet; "gave she the smallest welcome to his coasting? I—"

"On my troth," interrupted the incendiary in his turn, for it was no part of his plan to have Susannah questioned, "I saw not the slightest levity in her demeanour; indeed, for mine own part, I think her simplicity kept her from noticing his passaging to and fro on such an errand."

Dunbar added to this, an earnest petition for his uncle not to afflict an innocent girl, by calling her to account for what she could not help,—an idle libertine's admiration; rated himself for having, in his zeal to do her lady justice, exposed her to unmerited blame; and finally quitted his uncle at the foot of his cousin's staircase, pleasingly impressed with fresh notions of his kind though hasty nature.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. II.

A SECOND visit from her father in one day was so unusual a circumstance, that even the benumbed feelings of Miss Trevanion were moved, and she questioned the cause of his return with great anxiety.

Sir Fulk's errand was soon told: but, not as it would have been, previous to his late discourse with her cousin. His mood indeed was changed; and as he proffered her the medicine of her friend's company, under certain restrictions, he checked her bursting transport of joy and gratitude, by gravely adding: —

"This grace bestowed upon you, Aura, my parental duty is more than acquitted; and if it fail of the success I look for, my forbearance will end. I must have no fooling of me, by wilful giving way to fantastical feebleness. Neither my word, nor the royal goodness, will bear further trifling with: the restoration of your father's rights, perhaps, dependeth upon your dutiful conduct. I stand pledged, moreover,

Digitized by Google

both to the king and to your cousin, for a speedy end of the latter's suit to you. I press you not for a decision now; but, at the end of six months from this day, the 8th of October, I shall expect your direct answer to this question — Are you ready to give your hand, with all modest affection, to your cousin Dunbar? If you say, No! that day, — that hour, — that very moment, do I set my name and seal to a deed, which I go now to see prepared; by which Dunbar will be made sole heir to all I possess, or may regain, (excepting only a fitting portion for one kindless daughter.) Treverderet will never, after that, see a child of mine within its walls!"

"Oh, my father! my father!" exclaimed Miss Trevanion, starting from her chair with momentary power, "mean you to banish me then?"

"You will have banished yourself!" returned Sir Fulk, avoiding the sight of her pale wild looks. "I think you will not like to stay where Dunbar's wife — for wife he shall have — is appointed mistress. I cannot but resent the disappointment of my dearest wish; and such degradation will be only a just punishment of your folly

Digitized by Google

or disobedience! But," he added, for the sound of her convulsive weeping shook his stern resolution of frightening her into compliance, "I will hope better things, both for you and for myself. Marry Dunbar, and you will take one vulture from this tortured heart — the grievous consciousness of having no loving child!"

Without staying for a reply, or second look at her desolated countenance, her father, withdrawing the eye he had momentarily darted upon her, hastily quitted the apartment.

Time was, when Miss Trevanion would have been left fixed in horror at the cruel return expected from her by her father, for the slight grace of permitting her to admit a school companion; but, of late, despair had stood her in the stead of heroism; and feeling within her an invincible resolution of never wedding the false kinsman whose wickedness she now knew to a certainty, she was ready to leave all else connected with her fate, to the will of Providence. In this moment of blissful excitement and revived energies, she believed the Divine hand would eventually open to her some gate of escape from the threatened evil of

Digitized by Google

her father's vow; and trusting that it would, after all, be by her brother's instrumentality, she recovered from her surprise of consternation, to freer and happier thoughts. To see, — to hear, — to talk with Eveleen Hungerford was such unlooked for joy, and so surely did she reckon upon receiving comfort from her, that at first she fancied herself strong enough to go directly to the terrace; but sinking down, from previous exhaustion, as she was making an effort to cross the room, and seriously fearful that if not sent quickly, the happy invitation would not be allowed, she rang for her maid, and briefly telling her what she required, and for what purpose, penned a short billet to her friend.

Rejoicing to find that any source of pleasure was opening to her disconsolate lady, Susannah gladly undertook to get the note immediately conveyed to Mistress Flavel, by her brother; and, thus sent, it would not excite speculations amongst the people of Rohesia; a consequence, of which Sir Fulk had expressed great aversion. In this note Aura stated her father's rules for her conduct towards Lord Carraton's niece, and named the forenoon of the ensuing day for their first meeting.

Digitized by Google

The hours which intervened between the sending of this letter and the expected visit,—even the hours of a sleepless night,—were spent by Miss Trevanion in a state of restless emotion, to which she had long been a stranger. She was like one of those torpid creatures who lie through the winter in deathly insensibility, but wake to life and motion by the first breath of spring.

Only a few hours before this, and she had believed her very capacity of happiness annihilated; and despairing so, would have deemed any effort to obtain an instant's pleasurable thrill, hopeless as useless. Now she glowed at the bare idea of being once more pressed to a sympathising bosom; and as she dwelt on the delightful imagination, wept tears of gratefulness to Heaven, and to her father, all fearful as he was.

Cheering anticipations proved their cordial effect, by rousing the feeble Aura to some notice of her own looks, now she was expecting to see her friend on the next day. That she might not shock a tender nature by any aggravation of her changed appearance, she took some pains to conceal it by more careful dress. She attempted also to do, what however her ready Susannah

Digitized by Google

completed, to set her secluded apartment in order, and deck it out with the few flowers of the season.

Making preparations for the reception of a beloved visitant, is a sort of foretaste of their company; and we must be in the very depths of misery, when one we love, comes and goes, without such witness to the ardour with which we have anticipated their approach.

Miss Trevanion had appointed the forenoon for her time of receiving Eveleen, because she knew, that at that period of the day, her company was never required by her family: and scarcely imagining the possibility of other claims upon her now, she sat breathlessly waiting the mission of Susannah.

It cannot be necessary to paint the glad surprise, the passionate thankfulness of Eveleen, when she received the unexpected billet from her friend, telling her that what she most wished, was given without her seeking. Here, at once, was the door thrown open to those confidences and consultations which might have such an important effect upon the happiness of all parties. They might discuss together every

Digitized by Google

thing relating to the unknown fugitives—to Lord Villiers's history of the park affair: and although Eveleen might not then reveal the secret of having Philips under her protection, she guessed that she would learn that from her friend, which would turn his fears of mischief from her, into security of her co-operation: considering it, therefore, as an especial providence, that she should thus be enabled to fathom the mystery of that dark affair, Philips's betrayal, and congratulating herself upon Lady Rhoda's absence, she hurried, at the appointed time, to the terrace, her heart alternately swelling and melting with tender memories of former meetings.

That friendly heart had outrun time; so that Eveleen had to wait through two quarters chiming of the clock, amongst the falling leaves of the fading trees, on the Rohesian side, ere she was called to appear under the green boughs of the unchanging cedars in Treverderet.

At the respectful challenge of Susannah Hollis, our adventurous heroine sprang over the balustrade, and lightly vaulting down, in a voice fluttering with happy expectation, bade her conduct her to her friend by the shortest possible way.

Digitized by Google

Having once made the entire tour of Sir Fulk Trevanion's home domain, in company with Aura, Eveleen was not unacquainted with the wildered, now leaf-strewn walks, through which she walked, and which she had last seen in May greenness. The short way to the house led through the evergreen garden, one deeply-embowered portal of which, directly pointed to that side of the old mansion that contained the apartments of Miss Trevanion, and took in the alms-houses of the first court. As Susannah pushed open the heavy, nail-studded door, Eveleen raised her eyes to the projecting window which she knew belonged to her friend's room. At another time, the rich carving of its stone supports, and the quaint ornaments surrounding and crossing its brightly-tinctured panes, would have caught her attention; but, at the present, she only looked for the loved and living face there, and not seeing it, uttered an involuntary "alas!" — She guessed not that the agitated watcher there, having ascertained her approach, was hastily thrown into a seat, to recover from an overpowering seizure of joyful certainty. A few steps further brought them into the foun-

Digitized by Google

tain-court, when, turning into a long passage, and ascending thence by a secondary staircase to Miss Trevanion's apartment, they stopped at the door of her little sitting-room.

Eveleen had fancied herself strong in nerves and spirit, till she found the contrary: when Susannah opened this door, with a gentle call to her within, she drew back to fetch a fluttered breath: the next instant she felt herself within the chamber, alone with her friend, in a sort of dim mysterious light, produced by the stained glass and the heavy curtains of the window.

Aura Trevanion was on her neck, speechless from many emotions. Eveleen felt that she was not weeping, yet sigh thronging after sigh, testified that tears would have been a welcome relief. Her own flowed fast and freely; still, however, as was her wont, she wispered words of comfort and gladness at every renewed pressure of her supporting arms. "I ought, I ought to be abundantly grateful for this," her friend ejaculated, attempting to smile whilst half suffocated by convulsive sighings. "Oh, Eveleen, if I could but forget my poor brother!"

"No forgetting of your brother!" in-

Digitized by Google

terrupted her friend, pierced to the heart by Miss Trevanion's wasted form and labouring breath; "pray, hope that he may be righted."

At the animation with which this was said, Miss Trevanion looked up; the light in her friend's countenance, though it broke through showering tears, was not to be mistaken. "Oh! you have blessed news for me of some sort!" she cried, and as if these were already told, she let her head drop upon the shoulder from which she had raised it.

Miss Hungerford hastened to explain her meaning; doubting, however, at times, whether she were not pouring her tale into an ear temporarily stopped; for whilst she hurried through a brief narration of what had befallen her in her uncle's company, of her subsequent encounter with the same stranger after the rout of the Monmouthites, and of what Lord Villiers had told her concerning the affair of Philips, Miss Trevanion gave not a sign of life.

It was not till the narrative came to that part where the fugitive stripling bare such unequivocal witness to the foul play practised upon the character of her brother,

Digitized by Google

that she slid from her friend's arms to the floor; where, with locked hands and streaming eyes, she remained upon her knees, ejaculating such broken sentences as mock all studied prayers for force and fervency.

Many a warm embrace was exchanged between the friends—many a question hurriedly put, and as hurriedly answered, before Eveleen Hungerford could complete her history.

It was necessary to tell Miss Trevanion that she had not yet received intelligence of the fugitive's security beyond sea; and as she did so, she suggested, that unforeseen circumstances might have deterred them; but had any such important prisoners been taken, their capture would have become public. In saying this, Eveleen naturally imparted her fancy of the elder stranger being the brother of her friend. She repeated the trifling incidents which had excited the idea; particularly her persuasion of having seen himself or something like him before that; and listened in her turn to Aura's minute comparing of her description, with what she knew of Arundell's lineaments and figure.

Eveleen owned that she could not draw

Digitized by Google

or describe the stranger's features; and grace, expression, manly proportions, and a noble air, are phrases of such wide signification, that, although Miss Hungerford did not think the look familiar to her was a resemblance to Lord Villiers, which Aura reluctantly said was in her brother's face, she maintained her opinion with infectious pertinacity.

There was nothing, indeed, which militated forcibly against the probable identity of Arundell Trevanion with the gallant fugitive, except the Spanish complexion of the latter; but this, the fond sister was too anxious to believe coloured by art, not to lend her full credence to it, when hesitatingly suggested by Miss Hungerford.

At the idea of her brother wandering a houseless fugitive round their father's walls, without daring to enter them, perhaps to get sight of her, tears gushed from the sister's eyes, and another long fit of weeping, sadder and less easily stayed than the preceding one, shook her almost to annihilation.

The tumult of so many jarring feelings was, indeed, so great, that it was almost beyond the power of so shattered a frame

Digitized by Google

to support; and Eveleen was, therefore, obliged to forbid her friend any mention of what had occurred to her since they last met, until a sufficient pause of discourse between them should have composed both.

To ensure her friend's quietude for awhile, our heroine summoned Susannah Hollis, by ringing one of those little bells of flowered silver which were common in ladies' chambers, when the modern, light hung wire-bells were uncommon even in state apartments. At her suggestion, Susannah brought in a salver of chocolate and cake to refresh her lady; and detaining the respectful waiting maid to assist in inducing her to eat, Miss Hungerford stole on the time, and gently moved her friend by the music of her voice, by her questions and remarks upon the antique furniture which she addressed to Susannah.

Miss Trevanion no sooner felt herself sufficiently recruited, than she dismissed her attendant, and smiling sweet thanks for Eveleen's consideration of her feebleness, proceeded to relate what had made such havoc with her young hopes.

In going over the details of all she had feared and felt in London, Miss Trevanion

Digitized by Google

proved that to have attempted it before her friend had taken the prime sting out of her heart would have been a vain effort. Often and often did the lively remembrance of past agonies overcome her, as though their cause yet existed; whilst her friend, listening with breathless interest and silent sympathy, testified it only by echoing the sighs that burst from the poor narrator's breast, and reflecting in her eye the tear that hung upon the latter's cheek.

The important matter of Miss Trevanion's communication, might be summed up in the clear light thrown upon the real enemy of Arundell Trevanion; in the further elucidation of the park affair; and in the necessity there was for prompt acting, if the friends of the rightful heir hoped to preserve his inheritance from being irrevocably settled upon that villain who had taken advantage of past events to plan his ruin.

But how to do this with the greatest prospect of success, was the question.

Miss Trevanion, in the tumult of her raised feelings, was for a full avowal to her father of what had brought her into perfect belief of her cousin's continued machina-

Digitized by Google

tions to divide the parent and son. But as the main charge against Dunbar (and upon conviction of his falseness every other condemning point hinged) must be brought by herself, it was too likely that her father would refuse to take her single testimony, deeming it worse than suspicious, after his late denunciation of her unless she wedded Dunbar. Lord Villiers, too, could not be brought forward; his testimony, unhappily, being considered neither credible nor creditable by most men; therefore easily to be overthrown by an adroit opponent. The explicit evidence of the strangers in the wood was still only the evidence of strangers; and they, persons belonging to a party who might be suspected of wishing to serve the exiled heir of Treverderet, at any cost of truth. Eveleen knew that they must not calculate upon fond credulity in one of Sir Fulk Trevanion's age and character; they must not attempt to reach him with any presumptions in favour of his son, but wait until manifest facts, witnessed to by unblemished and disinterested persons, could be brought at once before him.

As this mode of proceeding required time for its ripening, she saw that great

Digitized by Google

care must be taken to keep the family traitor from discovering the toils spreading for him. Prudence suggested that such deep dissemblers must be dealt with in something of their own fashion; yet against this a noble nature revolted: so that nothing less than the conviction, that upon close concealment depended the future honour and happiness of the Trevanion family, could have won Miss Hungerford to say, that to strike the treacherous villain with a sure blow, he must be struck unconsciously.

Her advice to her friend therefore was, that she should avoid all occasions of provoking the anger or suspicions of her base cousin; but preserving a tranquil kind of coldness to him, lead him so, to imagine her resigned to yield him up his expected inheritance that she might be left to singlehood. She further urged her, by every hope of future good, once thought desperate, to rouse her body by the force of her reawakened spirit; to apply herself anew to the duty of pleasing her father; to rely upon her friend for unwearying activity in her service; and to wait, with chastened expectation, the course of events, or rather

Digitized by Google

the operations of that Providence, which Eveleen presumed to believe would sooner or later blast the cruel policy of Dunbar Trevanion. Our heroine was too sanguine of success in a good cause not to infuse much of her own trust into the mind of her friend, upon whose pale cheek present consolation threw almost the light of health. The latter expressed herself satisfied to follow the given counsel, trusting Arundell's fate to himself and Heaven: for were the gallant unknown her brother, he must know how successfully he had been slandered even to majesty itself, and know best by what means he might redress his public wrong. Enough for her, she said, that she could now brood over his dear image with the love and esteem of early days, lamenting his suffering, not his offences.

Eveleen encouraged her in such feelings, whilst briefly stating her hopes from Lord Woodvill, who being beyond sea, might, if she gave her a discretionary power to confide in him, on due occasions, assist Arundell in obtaining justice through the Prince of Orange. The removal of Mr. Trevanion's unjust attainder appeared the matter of the

Digitized by Google

first moment; since whatever was Sir Fulk's foregone anger at his son, it seemed that the latter's alleged share in Monmouth's rebellion, had determined him to the irrevocable act of signing away his inheritance even during his own lifetime.

"Would that my uncle Lake were of our council here!" exclaimed Eveleen, with all her wonted animation. "Oh, the woful hinderance of distances and duties!—And for my Lord Villiers, who is like enough to come soon to Rohesia, helpful as he might be, he is no fitting coadjutor for two young maidens. The utmost I may venture with him, will be to get out of him how he came by his information about your letter from Philips."

This return to the name of him who, even under the odious influence of wine, had shown native good feeling, drew from Miss Trevanion a sincere confession of great obligation to him, both for his timely aid of Philips, and his honourable silence afterwards. She then added, with amiable earnestness, that she hoped he was proving himself worthy of the better character given of him by the good Bishop of Chichester, and following up that honest protection of a defenceless woman, by yet higher things.

Digitized by Google

Eveleen sighed benevolently as she answered, that she feared he was again lost to his best friends, by a relapse into habits which the active duties he had volunteered under Lord Feversham, had wonderfully suspended. He had suddenly taken the resolution of cutting the gordian knot at once, of certain pernicious acquaintance in England, of seeking new associates and new habits in the service of a prince severely moral and imposingly great; and had therefore written to tell his wife he meant to accept a commission under the Prince of Orange—a step his uncle, the old Duke of Buckingham approved—provided she would accompany him into Holland, and trust him for a hearty endeavour at repairing both his character and fortune. This, however, Lady Villiers had refused; her own wish of doing whatever her husband liked, being immediately overborne by her tyrannical mother. Lady Rhoda marshalled place in possession, place in prospect at the nobler court of London; gifts and graces in addition; together with arguments against the folly of Villiers himself; and so obtained her daughter's permission to write a decided refusal. All the uneasy prodigal's mis-

Digitized by Google

deeds, caprices, and abortive schemes of amendment hitherto, were quoted to him — "and so there he is amongst his set again," Eveleen concluded, sadly, "just in that angry mood which hurries men down precipices!"

"A lack, the pity!" responded Miss Trevanion, her eyes moistening. "I am such a debtor to this unhappy young lord, that I shall never be loth to pay him something, in prayers for his better guidance! Do you think he would have done well, had he been let to go his way on this occasion?"

"The experiment was worth trying," returned her friend; "and had I been his wife, I should have tried it: good, might—harm, could not come of it—at least only a little paltry harm of life's trappings. I saw his letter; and it was writ with much earnestness and argument; but they were not understood—and I got only my aunt's displeasure for interfering with my opinion. In truth, Aura, she might have urged one argument against my hope in the experiment, which she had not wit for."

"And what is that?"

"That no abiding plant can spring from an unsound root. Poor Villiers will waste

Digitized by Google

his days between sinning and repenting, between hating others and hating himself, until he is brought to see what principle alone can end the struggle, and give virtue the victory. Pray for him then, sweet heart! In Christian kindness, pray that he may become convinced of truths he now but dreams may be such!"

Miss Trevanion gave a few more benevolent wishes to the entire change of Lord Villiers upon the most important of subjects, then resumed the conversation about the gallant deliverer of Bishop Lake; secretly delighting herself by observing the mixed vivacity and embarassment, with which Eveleen parried off such questions, concerning his appearance and manner, as were likely to betray that partial thought of them which the inexperienced Aura passionately and warmly desired. It cost her some effort not to give expression to her wishes; but, as in every interview with a friend after long separation, there is a strangeness which throws restraint upon some subject of confidence, that fearfulness acted now in Miss Trevanion; and to Eveleen's surprise, perhaps slight disappointment, she did not once revert to

Digitized by Google

her former fond longing for a union between her and her brother; she contented herself with lavish testimonies of the most grateful friendship.

Having ministered thus happily to her friend's mind, Miss Hungerford playfully insisted upon doing something for her body; therefore invited her to sun herself in the winter garden, which Sir Fulk's gracious ordinance had assigned them the sole use of. Susannah Hollis was again summoned to assist in transporting her lady there; an operation which, without the aid of stronger arms than those which endeavoured to support a trembling invalid down a steep staircase, was slow and fearful.

The object, however, was attained, and the autumn noon enjoyed. Books, work, and a lute were brought to the evergreen arbour; where Aura Trevanion, once more seated under its broad arch, listened to the voice of her friend, singing soft and low to her, with eyes floating in sweet memories, and a heart beating thanksgivings for unhoped-for joy.

Conscious that she had yet greater pleasure in store for her dear companion, whenever Philips would consent to have his

Digitized by Google

confession repeated to her, Eveleen Hungerford husbanded the former's strength; and afraid of over-exciting her, occasionally discoursed upon subjects of general interest; thus leaving her heart time to rest, and guarding against the possibility of a lurking eaves-dropper.

One there would have been assuredly, had he dared the bold act in the very teeth of his uncle's prohibition to approach the retired spot appointed for his daughter's free use — one that, as it was, could not help hovering, though at a distance, within eye-shot of all the paths leading immediately to the house, as if catching a glimpse of the suspected enemy in her progress thither, could have revealed her purposes!

Under pretence of fishing, Colonel Trevanion stationed himself for that morning on a bank by the river side, where he sat, much in the spirit with which Milton's satan traversed the outward circuit of Eden, successively observing Miss Hungerford's entrance into Treverderet; her passage thence across into the evergreen garden with her tottering cousin; and, lastly, her departure, under Susannah Hollis's convoy, by a path leading widely away from him. He could

Digitized by Google

but allay the rage of baffled curiosity and irritating misgivings, by resolving to leave no art unpractised against the inferior members of the coalition he dreaded, which might bring such seeming mischief out of these private meetings, as would chafe Sir Fulk into forbidding any species of intercourse between the families. Dunbar calculated not unwisely upon the timid reverence of Miss Trevanion for all her father's positive commands; and he thought, therefore, that by getting such an interdict put upon their correspondence with Eveleen Hungerford, he would at once suffocate all plots against him, and find cause to bless the very alarm now, which was bringing things to that crisis.

Once in the domain of Rohesia, Eveleen did not rest until she had visited Philips, and hastily explained to him the conduct of Miss Trevanion; telling him all that was necessary to bring conviction to his mind of the poor young lady's betrayal by her cousin, and her unfeigned desire, not only to avoid an union with this perfidious kinsman, but to secure her brother's rights from his grasp.

The generous protection afforded him

Digitized by Google

with peril to herself, by her who spoke, was of itself a guarantee for her truth. Philips consented to let Miss Trevanion be informed of his vicinity, and of his anxiety to lessen the burthen upon his conscience, by undertaking any commission which should have his injured master's good for its object. But he started when Eveleen proposed his giving her friend a meeting somewhere. His changed countenance at once showed what apparitions of terror that proposition had conjured up. Eveleen hastened to state that she suggested it because assured that her friend would greatly desire such an interview, that she might question him upon matters which it did not become a stranger to pry into.

Philips, indeed, having erred on one memorable occasion, by presumptuous judging for, and acting for his master, owned himself painfully anxious never again to outrun the privilege of a confidential servant; and thanking his protectress for her considerate delicacy, admitted that he had much to enquire about, for his master's satisfaction, which possibly he ought not to ask of any one except his sister. After a short pause, he added, that his mind was

Digitized by Google

made up to run all risks in the execution of his duty.

It was then settled, that in her next day's visit to Treverderet, Eveleen should reveal his concealment to her friend, and learn from her if she could find any way of reaching the Lady's Chapel. Reckoning upon her doing so, Eveleen further suggested that the interview should take place at dusk, when, from the general obscurity of objects, living shapes were often mistaken for accidents of light, or mist. The recreation of drinking her coffee in a favourite place, might very well account for her making an exertion to get there, and once in it, she might prolong her stay without suspicion. By having Miss Hungerford of the party, Philips's retreat might be easily effected at the very first dawn of danger without, and thus one cause of apprehension provided for.

There was one serious obstacle, however, to this scheme—the deplorable weakness of Miss Trevanion. How was it likely, that she, who could with difficulty totter into the garden just opposite her chamber window, should suddenly find strength for a walk of a mile's length? To wait some return of

Digitized by Google

her health was, therefore, indispensable; and Eveleen once more saw herself obliged to go on, for an indefinite time, in daily watching, and nightly anxiety, for a person whom common humanity had at first led her to succour. She then told Philips that she would willingly shelter him for as long a period as was necessary; cheering him, too, with remarks upon the additional vigour which his protracted stay in the hermitage would bestow upon him, rendering his escape therefore more certain.

Even while saying this to him, Eveleen had to combat with her own eager temper, and school herself to patience. Many a lesson of her honoured uncle's did she now recall, to calm the turbulence of impetuous feeling. She longed to learn, from her friend's after confidences, that which delicacy withheld her from asking of Arundell Trevanion's servant, what was the true condition of his master? and what, if he were her gallant preserver, could have brought him into such dangerous companionship as that of the youth she saw him with? More than ever afraid of having present prospects blighted, and rather uneasy whenever she was alone with a person of whom she knew

Digitized by Google

so little, she stifled further enquiries, and hurriedly took her leave, reminding Philips that she would depend upon his promise of not withdrawing himself without her knowledge, unless some very imminent danger of discovery threatened him.

So agitated was Eveleen, after two such conversations as those she had just been holding, first with her beloved Aura and then with Philips, that, instead of going immediately to Lady Villiers, she went straight to her own apartment, where she threw herself on a settee, to think over what had been said.

She had been at last within that old mansion which she had so long desired to visit, the memorable scene of many an historical event, the residence of many of the great and good of former days, now living only in the glory of their fame; but where was her wonted enthusiasm when there? What note-worthy memorials, that she once panted to see, had she seen, or even thought of? She shook her head at her own change; feeling, with some suspicion of the truth, that her whole soul had been absorbed in nearer interests, and those entered into no longer from pure sympathy, but as parts and parcels of her future destiny.

Digitized by Google

Some excuse for this might be found in the overpowering joy of being again by the side of Aura Trevanion—a friend so endeared and so forlorn, to whom her mere presence was bringing comfort; but Eveleen would not lay that flattering unction to her soul: she felt that Aura had become dear from her relationship to him whose bright aspect seemed to make all others blots to her, and that perhaps she was labouring for her own happiness, when she fancied herself doing all she did for mere friendship. This was not a state she believed it right to rest in; and she fancied that it would end, as soon as her inventive imaginations concerning Mr. Trevanion, could be superseded by the positive facts of his history.

"I have seen him but twice;—to be sure, in most interesting situations—and he showed himself so noble!—If that singular countenance had not haunted me ever since, I should almost have forgotten him by this time—perhaps! Yet how could that be, when every thing that happens to me seems fated to keep him in my thoughts? However, when all ends, and this strange excitement subsides, I shall be able to conquer myself; for it never could be!—I a Hun-

Digitized by Google

gerford—and he——but what matters it? Woodvill most likely reports rightly;—Arundell Trevanion's affections may be fixed elsewhere."

Such were the broken sentences which dropt at intervals from Eveleen, whilst sitting in listless melancholy, communing with herself. The last she uttered, her young heart refused to believe. She knew herself formed to attract hearts even at first sight; and certain remembrances thrilled within her, which made it impossible, she thought, that her uncle's liberator should, when looking on her, have had his eyes sealed by devotion to another.

Cheated by this sweet idea, and persuaded she was not so—rather heroically resigned to utter disappointment of a weak wish, she roused up to cheerfulness, and restored her company to the now expectant Lady Villiers.

It seemed better now, to tell her cousin of her visit to the invalid Miss Trevanion, and to name it slightly before the servants, lest a vexatious discovery of Philips' should occur in consequence of her longer absence being a subject of curiosity to some of the many unoccupied lackeys at Rohesia. She made this communication, therefore, directly

Digitized by Google

after joining Lady Villiers, involving such details of her school intimacy with her former play-mate, and such a report of the latter's sad state, as rendered it no longer surprising that even Sir Fulk Trevanion should wave his repugnant feelings for awhile, and try a last experiment upon his daughter's melancholy and sickness. Eveleen took care to say what were the knight's rigid plans for their meeting; adding, with a smile, that if Lady Rhoda, on her return, should fancy she might build a renewal of neighbourly cordiality upon this extraordinary act of one hitherto implacable in aversion, she would be grievously mistaken.

No one was more easily dealt with than Lady Villiers; for she never heard, saw, or thought more than her companions desired she should do. She amused herself some moments with various absurd questions, harmlessly meant, yet sincerely galling to her listener; wondered to hear that Miss Trevanion's bed-hangings were really not tatters of piebald tapestry, and the cake she ate not worm-eaten; then laughed and confessed that whenever folks were highly diverting in their descriptions of things, it was generally by exaggeration; and finally

Digitized by Google

forgot " ruinous Treverderet, its grey-headed rooks, wilderness gardens, and skeleton servants," in the busy idling of making pot pourri.

On the morrow Eveleen required no quickener to speed her away to her friend. A daily visit was allowed, provided Miss Hungerford chose to use that liberty; and it was understood that by a certain road to the house, she would never be embarrassed by meeting either the knight or his nephew. Sir Fulk Trevanion was as proud of his courtesy as of his ancestry, and distinctly marked his purpose of showing all due civility of the passive kind to the niece of his enemy. By the permitted way our heroine hastened now.

As she looked up at the clear, blue sky, how thankfully beat her heart! A day of rain would have undone her hopes; and this was the season when such days are frequent. At Rohesia she forgot seasons; for summer was always waving round its gay balconies in the shape of foreign shrubs and trees, that rapidly succeeded each other throughout the whole year in bowers of bloom and verdure.

Eveleen passed at once from an extensive

Digitized by Google

orangery, the very climate of which had a southern glow from art, into the dark sylvan paths of Treverderet; there the dewy moss, carpeting open spaces, and the depths of sallow leaves covering shaded ones, told her that such days as the present, would soon pass away.

Autumn indeed was come: the absence of the foxglove and the harebell from the woods, and the presence of china-asters and michaelmas daisies in the cottage gardens, had long proclaimed the fact; but until now it had not detained Eveleen's thoughts. Instead of the cuckoo and the swallow, she heard the owl and the robin; she saw the hedge blossoms changed into fruit, and the nests of the rooks appearing at the tops of the high trees. She paused, and fancied for a moment the interruption to her future visits, which the perverse accidents of weather and indisposition might prove — accidents, however trifling in themselves, which, by combination with different individuals' humours or claims, often form insuperable obstacles to the action of the will. But the pause and the pain were brief: she remembered that not even a sparrow falls by accident; and she went cheerfully on.

Digitized by Google

Miss Hungerford reached the old house without encountering any one, except a venerable man, who, from his beadsman's dress, and his employment in Lady Trevanion's garden (for he was keeping some of the larger evergreens in their quaint shapes,) she rightly concluded to be Eustace Saulay's grandfather. She would have stopped to discourse with him, but feared further transgression of Sir Fulk's implied rules than what she hazarded by stooping for the woollen bonnet which fell from his withered hand, as he would have doffed it, amazedly, at so fair and unwonted an apparition. She passed swiftly on; but the sunshine of her sweet smile had left a glow in the aged breast more cheering than the genial noon, which had drawn him forth; and as he gazed after, he blessed her, wondering who she was, and whence she came.

Eveleen found her friend very unlike what she had been when they met only the preceding day. Miss Trevanion's first accents showed how soon happy thoughts attune the voice to their music: signs of employment were before her, on a small table of carved oak, where a pot of fresh-gathered geraniums and myrtles received

Digitized by Google

the sunny air admitted from the opened window. Her cheek was slightly coloured by it, or else by expectation; and when she raised her eyes to Eveleen, the tears in them were evidently those of delightful emotion. Their welcoming embrace was a silent one. After that, more than the usual words of greeting were exchanged, and mutual sympathies of waking thoughts, pleasing dreams, and morning omens (flattering ones of course), repeated. Few lovers meet more rapturously; not many sisters with truer tenderness.

Eveleen secretly counted the moments until she saw her friend's fluttered nerves sufficiently composed again to bear more agitation. She then briefly acquainted her with the momentous fact of her brother's servant being concealed within bow-shot of her house.

Miss Trevanion's seizure of surprise at this amazing show of fortune, beggars description — alarm for her friend's sake succeeded; but surprise and alarm turned into joy, when the particulars of Eveleen's conversations with him were detailed: his remorse — his purpose — their plan for bringing him to Treverderet — described and urged.

Digitized by Google

To her open acknowledgment of believing now, that Providence was providing for the restoration of her brother, by a succession of wonderous events, followed a transport of gratitude to Eveleen. She flung herself repeatedly upon that dear friend's neck, blessing her for the share she had in this most important witness's preservation; and calling her the tutelary angel of their ruined house, she no longer restrained the expression of her fond expectations, that Eveleen was destined to build it up again, by giving happiness, in her dear person, to its now suffering heir.

For one thrilling moment, ere she answered, Miss Hungerford felt her heart flutter with the sweet fancy of being heaven-destined to this; and for that moment, she thought with complacency of her enlarging fortune, and the last, treasured look of the gallant unknown. But sighing the fancy away, she said, with touching ingenuousness, "Tempt me not, sweetest Aura, to mar right things, by wrong thoughts. I do confess to you, that if it be your brother I saw and conversed with ——" Here she paused, a blush and a smile contending for the mastery of her cheek. "I liked that sight of him so well,

Digitized by Google

that ——" Here she paused again, checked another less controllable sigh, with a sweeter smile — for there was a submitted sadness in it — then added, with attempted playfulness, "I liked that sight of him too well, ever to wish for another."

"What say you? not desire another sight of my brother?"

"Nay, no chafing at your friend's poor discretion!" exclaimed Eveleen, her face becomingly dyed with the idea of confessing what this deep blush heralded: "did I not tell you, in times past, that I was pledged to my dear uncle and others, for keeping my affections free for Lord Woodvill, should he prove deserving? and as I know not how your brother may have disposed of his, besides being sure Sir Fulk would never hear of a Hungerford matching into his family —"

"Nay, nay, Eveleen!" interrupted Miss Trevanion, "all you told me of the gallant person you met, assures me he had not seen you unmoved."

"But I cannot be sure he is your brother," interrupted Eveleen, in her turn arguing against her hopes; "and, if not, I shall never see him more, perhaps."

Digitized by Google

"Would I could show it to her!" Miss Trevanion abruptly exclaimed, after momentary abstraction.

"Show what?" enquired her startled friend.

"Arundell's picture — that dear banished portrait, which I, myself, have not looked on for months; nor, in truth, know exactly where to find."

At this unexpected proposal, or rather reference, to what would settle one agitating point at once, Miss Hungerford's prudent resolutions were put to flight. She eagerly enquired farther, and learnt, with much regret, that Mr. Trevanion's picture having been taken from its original station in the family sitting-room, by Sir Fulk's orders, in one of his fiercest moods, was put out of sight, his sister knew not whither — never hitherto daring to ask. She, however, thought it was probably locked up amongst other discarded things in some of the waste rooms above, where there were ranges of unoccupied chambers; and that if she could take her friend there, it might be seen by her."

To effect this, three things were necessary: Sir Fulk's leave for Miss Hungerford

Digitized by Google

to be shown the house; the key of the waste rooms got from the housekeeper; and, lastly, Miss Trevanion's recovery of strength enough for the great fatigue of showing even part of a great house. At present, therefore, the search for this picture must be put aside, amongst other deferred objects of hope and fear; and, agreeing upon this, they tacitly united in terminating their amicable dispute about the sentiments fit to be indulged for its original; turning all their attention to settling the plan of Philips's safe entrance into the Treverderet domain.

Nothing could exceed the strife in Miss Trevanion's mind, as she then attempted to settle a plan for meeting him. At one moment she was impatient to hear all he could tell: at another, she bitterly recalled the evil she had caused, and, in a paroxysm of agony, exclaimed, "Oh, no! no! I shall not bear to look on him! — his foul treason!"

Eveleen's office was to soothe such indignant feeling, without questioning its justice. She simply bore upon the man's contrition, and the importance of securing its continuance; and, after some time, suc-

Digitized by Google

ceeded in allaying the distressing conflict between, what her friend deemed, inclination and principle.

Miss Trevanion's eagerness, when once she determined upon seeing him, induced her to urge his coming dangerously near the house; but this was finally rejected, from the chances there were against his escaping detection. To facilitate Eveleen's plan, therefore, was the only alternative.

It was then settled, that Miss Trevanion, that very day, should commence easy rides about the park, gradually extending them as far as the Lady's Chapel; which, having visited once in the forenoon, she might choose evening for her second visit; professing to have asked her friend's company there. The impatience with which Miss Trevanion owned she now looked to this second interview with Philips, was even greater than that with which she had anticipated their first disastrous one; and so strong was both will and desire in her, that, for the time, she believed herself able to name a day for meeting him, with perfect security of doing so. But to this rash eagerness, Eveleen opposed the mischievous consequences of such a proceeding. What-

Digitized by Google

ever might appear sudden or extraordinary in Miss Trevanion was to be avoided, lest any suspicion of a particular reason under it, should waken the sleeping vigilance of the dreaded Dunbar. However painful, therefore, delay must appear, Eveleen could not but repeat that the safest course to their present object was advancing by slow steps.

In conformity with this arrangement, no sooner was their hour of happy meeting over, than Miss Trevanion agreeably surprised her father, by telling him that her friend having recommended her to try the effect of being carried much through the air with small fatigue, she begged his permission to use one of the foresters employed in humbler services, and to travel by degrees through the whole of the domain.

Pleased with the desire to please him, which this proposed exertion indicated, Sir Fulk himself accompanied her on her first short tours over part of the home park. At first, the motion and the air, and, yet more, the secret hopes of her heart, animated her above herself; but ere she could get back, the excitement of her

Digitized by Google

eye and cheek sank, and she was, in truth, a lifeless burthen, when her father lifted her from the palfrey, and carried her gently up to her own apartment.

The next day, however, she took a shorter airing; but on the following one she went out twice at distant intervals; so that on the third she reached half way to the desired point.

As if the very elements were in league with sisterly love, the weather, which before that had been boisterous, though bright, became serene; light morning mists were succeeded by warm noons, and crystal evenings; so that even an invalid might go out in them without being accused of rashness. In less than a week, Miss Trevanion was able to fix the day and hour for meeting Philips, and Eveleen gladly undertook the commission of apprizing him of it. Prudence suggested that their unwitnessed conference should take place in the crypt, whilst Miss Hungerford watched above, to give timely warning of intruders: an instant's alarm would suffice for Miss Trevanion's ascent from the vault, and Philips's escape into the adjacent grounds.

Let it not be supposed that a person of

Digitized by Google

Eveleen Huugerford's principles contrived thus, modes of masking her actions, without frequent pauses, to be sure that she was not wandering into wrong ways, in an over eager pursuit of a right aim. Let it not be thought that Miss Trevanion, considering a parent's rights with implicit faith, was not anxious to ascertain that she was not violating one filial obligation, by her efforts for the future re-union of two objects equally dear — her father and her brother.

They did sift their conduct and their motives most scrupulously; and convincing themselves, at length, that both could bear their own scrutiny, Miss Trevanion grew bold, and proposed (if Philips's circumstances should require it) taking into her confidence her brother's early friend, the good old Saulay. Saulay was often visited by former associates, brother fishermen of the coast, and Miss Trevanion not unwisely thought he might, by means of one of them, facilitate Philips's escape. Nay, she believed that Saulay, aged as he was, would readily, for the good cause of righting an injured man, consent to withdraw in Philips's company, and so relieve her from the fear of consequences fatal to his life.

Digitized by Google

Flattering herself that such a withdrawal would prove only a temporary banishment, she was willing to give him some of her few jewels for his support beyond the Channel, and stated her idea with sanguine eagerness. But Eveleen was not so ready to draw upon the affections of a grateful heart: she never looked upon old age without that mingling of reverence and compassion which pledged her to herself for all the protection she could afford it. Old Walter particularly interested her; therefore it would have delighted her to have loitered in his little garden, whenever Miss Trevanion took her through it by way of shorter passage to the evergreen arbour; but the apprehensions of attracting harm to him by such notice, and causing Colonel Trevanion to suspect the coalition forming against him, checked the wish, and confined her to a passing praise of his pretty parterre, and a kindly enquiry after his rheumatism.

She gently urged now her lothness to bring the venerable beadsman into their confidence, unless most pressing circumstances demanded it; and at her first arguments, the docile Aura yielded up the thought.

Digitized by Google

In crossing the vine court, the friends encountered Colonel Trevanion, and either by accident or design, so directly, that both parties were bound to exchange courtesies.

A gallant obeisance to Miss Hungerford, and one more marked to his shrinking cousin, with a lowered eye as well as hat, was returned by Eveleen's simple curtsey, and by her trembling companion with a hurried "good morrow, cousin Dunbar!"

"Your pardon, madam—my dear cousin," resumed the hypocrite, with a well-dissembled air of reverential humility to her, and a glance of respectful admiration at her friend, — "if I crave your commands for the house of Trefusis, whither I am going on concernment of mine uncle's. He would have its ladies invited hither, along with its master, since your precious health is restoring, and chooseth me for the ambassador. Like you that I should press their coming? for if you do not — "

Miss Trevanion interrupted him, with a raised complexion: — "I like all that my father liketh of such indifferent things," was her reply; "and I shall be at my post to receive these ladies."

The powerful look which Colonel Tre-

Digitized by Google

vanion had meant to tell what speculation concerning these daughters of Trefusis were in his uncle's mind for him, changed into one of well-acted sadness: — "I have then, your wishes for my speeding on this errand?" half questioned he.

"For your speeding in any honest business!" was his cousin's answer, chillingly uttered. — "I have nought from myself to employ you in towards these ladies, except proffering a hearty welcome; but I give you thanks for the offer."

Thus speaking, she passed him, hastening, with what speed she might, up to her chamber; where Eveleen chid her a little for the unguarded haughtiness with which she had taken her subtle cousin's covert assurance that he was really keeping his compact with her, and striving to bring his uncle into securing him another match. As, however, his embassy would occupy two or three days, for Sir Bevil Trefusis lived at Penzance, the certainty of his absence during the period allotted for Philips's entrance into the crypt, and for his subsequent flight, seemed singularly providential; and Miss Trevanion, in consequence, became cheerfuller at the thought of the anticipated interview.

Digitized by Google

Eveleen, sharing her pleasure and content, left her shortly afterwards; reminding each other that upon the evening of the ensuing day, depended matters of such importance, that it behoved them to ask a blessing on it from Him, who alone can make even success, happiness.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. III.

FULL of that sweet elation peculiar to youth in seasons of excitement and lively interests, Eveleen Hungerford thought she saw all the clouds breaking away from her own and her friend's prospects. She found herself compelled, as it were, into the active part she was taking for the restoration of Arundell Trevanion to character and his country; and her toleration as a visitor to his sister, by one who, like Sir Fulk, had hitherto been proof against any advance of her family, seemed to hint that he would not always be inexorable. She did him the credit of fancying that he considered his former rival with something of that generous feeling with which the truly brave look on a fallen foe in the field; and that Lord Carraton, afflicted by a son's disgraceful conduct, and no longer a prosperous courtier, would be less likely to have his proffered friendship spurned now, than when he rode in a car of triumph. Thus some conclusion might await her present agency,

Digitized by Google

which she yet ventured not to foresee, or at least to look too steadily upon.

Pleasant anticipations received a check when she got back to Rohesia. So much hinged upon Philips's safety that she was perfectly dismayed at hearing from Lady Villiers, on a gossip page's authority, that the secret of Mrs. Flavel's low spirits was discovered; "that she was in the pleasant practice of assignations with ghosts."

Although Lady Villiers affected this tone of contempt when speaking of apparitions, Eveleen well knew she was weakly susceptible of fear on such subjects, and, in consequence, anticipated vexation from it. The hermitage being named as one scene of Damaris's terror, threatened instant destruction to Philips. Eveleen rallied her scattered powers; took the tone of her cousin; and mentioning the situation of an æolian harp in the hermitage window, endeavoured to make its musical shrieks bear all the blame of her maid's fancies.

With Damaris herself, she softened playful incredulity by those expressions of indulgent kindness, which are more persuasive than reason itself. Poor Damaris was greatly agitated; and not a little desirous of telling her lady all that weighed upon

Digitized by Google

her conscience, and called up actually or ideally the visions that haunted her; but the remembrance of Colonel Trevanion's horrid warning, tied her tongue. She owned, however, that she had twice positively seen an apparition. Once it appeared, she said, in the shape of Master Frank Hollis, standing under her window in the grey of morning; and the second time, it was a ghastly skeleton that started out and rushed back into the door of the hermitage, one faint moonlight night as she was running home, after too late a stay at a friend's house.

Her lady's gentle pleasantries convinced her that the first apparition was no other than the living and enamoured Hollis; but against the second one, aware it was most likely Philips, she could not very strongly press the argument of self-delusion. However, Damaris herself, supplied her with a plausible reason for believing it would not continue to haunt her; the poor girl owning that she had stopped late to hear her fortune told, and believed her fright was its punishment.

Eveleen said all that might be expected from her on the last folly; adding that if there were sin in it as well as silliness,

Digitized by Google

there would he no more punishment when there were was no more offending. Her poor maid seemed comforted for the instant; but immediately relapsing into wild ejaculations about the dead allowing no rest to the living, when promises were unfulfilled — about dreams, omens, voices only heard by herself, Miss Hungerford began to fear her former perils had affected her faculties, and that time and tender forbearance alone would operate her cure.

Mrs. Flavel's present panic had arisen from the ridiculous circumstance of her name being called thrice by a starling belonging to the servants, which having got up amongst the hangings of a chamber she was passing through to the steward's room, and being unseen by her, sent her in amongst the pages and waiting maids, in a state just short of madness. The viewless voice was of course easily detected; but the mischief was done. All the household was in an uproar; and when in the midst of the general panic Lady Rhoda Brandon's running footman was seen vaulting with his ribbon-hung pole over one of the fences in front of the house, Eveleen gave Philips up for lost.

Digitized by Google

Her evil auguries were partly verified.—Lady Rhoda, arriving half an hour afterwards, went, as was her wont, first to her own apartments for the inspection of letters, bills, and receipts, accumulated during her absences; but more especially to get possession of all the household news from a female attendant, whose duty it was to keep a sort of police officer's eye over all domestic transactions, and report them ere the vigilant governess of Rohesia entered with her relations.

Upon the present occasion, Lady Rhoda caused every servant to be summoned into one of the outer halls, where, after sharply reprimanding them for their puerile fears, she pompously announced her resolution of showing them the absurdity of superstition, by sitting up in the hermitage herself the very next night, with no other companions than her snuff-box and her framework.

Eveleen, whom secret anxiety had brought into the *mêlée* of scared domestics, ventured to inveigh loudly against such rashness; first, protesting against such tempting of Providence; then arraying all the arguments she could think of about well-con-

Digitized by Google

certed tricks to terrify a lonely woman, roaming poachers, and smugglers on their desperate way to the coast.

Lady Rhoda, with sharp tenacity, observed, that by taking one of her brother's travelling pistols, and the stable mastiff, she would defy even a human apparition. What was there, indeed, which Lady Rhoda Brandon would not do, or attempt, to preserve her reputation of infallible?

Every servant hesitating to answer when bade to see that coffee and Lady Rhoda's tapestry frame should be in the hermitage by the next evening, Eveleen smilingly proffered her share in the laudable task of laying a ghost; assuring her aunt that she would compose her own litter of books and drawings in the hermit's cell, and make it fit for her reception. The offer was graciously accepted; after which, another scornful admonition dismissed the assembled household. But Eveleen could not escape; she was put into requisition for doing the honours of her aunt's early supper, during which the latter opened out upon the subject of her late journey. She had so far succeeded as to have stayed her brother awhile from going to see his son;

Digitized by Google

and to have influenced him to refuse his sanction to the hated marriage. By Lord Carraton's decided non-consent, Lord Hungerford, if living, might, by proper means, be brought to lend his own aid to annul the act; and, if dead, he would have left his widow without legal provision, consequently at the mercy of his family for support; an advantage that might afford them an opportunity of getting the ignorant Lady Hungerford to abandon the validity of her claims.

As Lady Rhoda partly unveiled these odious plans, sometimes triumphing in her easy conquest over her brother's parental feelings, sometimes anathematising all who could view such a base connection without abhorrence, it was difficult to say whether she talked more volubly in a glad than a violent strain; and having got up into her highest flight of vituperative eloquence, she did not allow either the weary Lady Villiers or the tortured Eveleen to retire, until nearly all the inferior domestics were gone to bed.

No sooner, however, was our poor heroine released, than hurrying on her plainest mantle, she stole out by a private en-

Digitized by Google

trance, and ran through the nearest paths that led to Treverderet. She might be said to be rather impelled by an instinct than by rational thought of getting Philips out of danger, for her whole being was in a confusion. She feared that Lady Rhoda's parade of courage would attain its object of making her talked of; and that attention once called to the maid's ghost stories, the most direful scrutiny of Rohesia and the adjacent places might follow: Philips, therefore, must be got away from the hermitage, and Aura Trevanion must contrive to meet him, long before the time appointed. It was impossible to believe that no one would think of a concealed fugitive, as the supposed spectre; and that idea would be ruin. In her present distraction of haste and apprehension, Eveleen could strike out no other plan for apprizing her friend of what had happened, than by trying to see Arundell Trevanion's early friend, the aged Saulay. If he would undertake to report the matter to Miss Trevanion as soon as she saw him the next morning, that she might repair at that time to the Lady's Chapel, she would hasten back to Philips, and send him for that night's protection to the crypt;

Digitized by Google

after which, all the remainder she must leave to the after counsel of those three persons and to Heaven's good purpose. Commending herself and each of them, again and again, to the care of Providence, she reached the boundary of the two domains, and bounding over it, crossed in a couching position an open quarter of the park; her heart beating at the possibility of being seen by some gamekeeper on his rounds, or some person at a window of the house. The moon was beginning to shine perfectly clear, and the chances of detection therefore increased.

She now gained an open path of the winter garden, where a long walk would bring her straight to a door that entered from old Saulay's plot of flowers: upon the accident of this door being unlocked, depended the whole success of her plan. She paused a moment whilst passing through the porch, looking behind and before her with panic recollection of her distance from home, and of the time of night. The moonlight glittering among the laurels and hollies of those wide and lonely gardens; the gleaming of the waters, lying in solemn stillness in their frames of mist-like tama-

Digitized by Google

risks, under the huge cedars; the silence and solitariness of the parks beyond; and the breadth of every shadow around, would have been too awful in their effect, had not the view behind, cheered by its day-like lustre. There, broad sheets of moonshine, extending over vast spaces of open park, silvered the earth with a splendour equal to the glorious pageant of successive cloud and brightness, in the sky. But not a leaf was stirring throughout the whole wilderness of woods darkening the horizon; not a living thing, so great was their stillness, appeared to inhabit them. There was something oppressive in this silence: and Eveleen was beginning to recall all the accredited stories she had ever heard of supernatural appearances in solitary places, when she was startled by what she thought the cry of some one in distress. Philips — his seizure —his murder, at once rushed upon her mind: the sound was repeated, though from a greater distance, and not so piercingly. She then recognized it to be only the owls calling and answering each other from different quarters of the domain. Their shrill and dismal cries might well be taken for the voices of persons lost in these

Digitized by Google

pathless parks, calling out for guidance. After such alarm, some moments more of pause were required before Eveleen's heart ceased its painful throbbings, and her limbs became strong enough to bear her forward; she then glided along through the cypress trees to the door she aimed at, and reaching, had the mortification of finding it fast bolted.

As she attempted to shake it from its fastenings, or haply to rouse the aged tenant within, from his nightly reading, first the low growl, and then the fierce bark of a watch-dog, somewhere near, took from her all power to proceed. She could hear the animal rushing to and fro amongst the bushes of the first court; whence she knew not but there might be some way by which he could reach her. At the thought of being attacked by such an enemy, it must be owned Miss Hungerford's bravery fled, and fancying she heard some one cheering him on to the assault, she turned round, and ran, without let or stay, till she found herself at the foot of the bank on which stood the lady's chapel. Flying round it, and breaking out into the Rohesian domain, through bush, tree, and water, she

Digitized by Google

sprang into the thick of the hermitage grove, where she struck against some person, whose arms instantly encircled her; whether to save her from falling, or to make her prisoner, she guessed not; but making a strong effort to get free, she revealed her face in the struggle, and her name, ejaculated by a voice familiar to her, at once terminated her fears.

The speaker proved to be Frank Hollis: apologizing for his unintentional boldness, which he owned to have been intended for whatever person came thus upon him, he respectfully explained the reason of his present intrusion into Rohesia. He had only heard of Mistress Flavel's hermitage apparition an hour before, after his day's task was over; and anxious to fathom the mystery, partly from his respect, he said, for sweet Mrs. Damaris—partly, he owned, from suspecting that some poor wretch might be lurking in the place whom he might help away, he hoped now all was quiet without wrong to his majesty, King James, he had determined to keep watch about the hermitage every night, till he should ascertain whether his conjecture were right.

Eveleen's involuntary "Thank God!"

Digitized by Google

followed by a warm approbation of his humane intentions, gave Hollis instant suspicion of her connection with whatever fugitive might be hidden in these shades; and as she pantingly questioned him upon his power and will, to help such a person out of the kingdom, he convinced her that he was one who required no recompense for doing a Christian act, and no persuasions beyond those of his own good feelings.

"There have been many such apparitions as this, I fancy," continued the cheerful Hollis; "and I am one, I hope not wickedly, that has helped such stories on. Now if your ladyship knows of any one in a strait, that my poor help ——"

He paused, waiting her seizure of his hint; but, seeing her look of distressful perplexity, he added, "It would not be my first job, so I should not do it bunglingly, nor fear to be caught in it. Had I not better come to a little damage in your ladyship's honourable service, than be trounced for some of the knaves' sakes that I have perilled myself for, since I put down my soldier's harness?"

Eveleen did hesitate to risk the life of such a worthy person; but as he had con-

Digitized by Google

fessed that his safety was already compromised, and seeing no alternative, she summoned resolution to accept his offer. Any meeting between Philips and Aura Trevanion was no longer to be dreamt of. Great as was the pang of deciding upon this, Eveleen could not escape it. Circumstances were so changed since the morning, that only prompt measures could remove the outlaw from certain detection, and to have found a faithful protector for him was a blessing of too great moment to be wantonly trifled with. She questioned Hollis upon his means of conveying a fugitive out of the kingdom; and being satisfied with his description of former hazards of the kind, and with the character of his assistants on the coast, she confessed that there was a person hidden in that solitude, who, if Hollis could get him safely away, would hereafter be the cause of his own and his master's comfort.

Having sworn the ardent young man to secrecy and fidelity, she left him to gaze on the moon, and to think of a brow as pale, and, to his fancy, as silver-bright as that fair orb herself, whilst she sought her prisoner in the hermitage.

Digitized by Google

It was some time ere Miss Hungerford could get an answer from Philips, whom the sound of steps and voices so near his hiding place, had driven into the interior cell, where he sat, pistol in hand, — Eveleen having supplied him with arms, — prepared to sell his life dearly if attacked.

At her gentle, though agitated entreaty for admittance, he undid the door, and she saw him, by the streaming moonbeams, standing thus on the defensive. His looks expressed anxious perturbation, for her mere appearance there, at such an hour, warned him of danger.

Her errand was quickly and distinctly told. She pledged herself for the honesty of the brave young man to whom he would be confided, although she had to say he was now in the service of Sir Fulk Trevanion, and had served in the Treverderet troop under Colonel Dunbar. Philips, all in amazement and disappointment, was many minutes ere he could express his feelings: he had no recollection of Hollis, who was, in truth, a menial boy when he left Treverderet — and he repeated his name with an air of bewilderment. Eveleen hastily urged him to trust her with whatever

Digitized by Google

message it might be important for Miss Trevanion to receive; to say where his master might be at present; and how letters from England, if need required, might reach his hands. Philips as hastily tendered only his duty to Miss Trevanion, time allowing of no confidential messages: he said, his master was probably in the Cevennes; and gave the name of the merchant banker in Holland through whom hitherto Sir Fulk Trevanion's few wrathful letters had been transmitted. To this gentleman first, Philips professed his purpose of going after he should reach the continent, that he might know exactly where to seek his master: his next step would be to present himself to Lord Woodvill, with the letter Eveleen had already given him.

Further conference upon things, however important, Eveleen saw to be dangerous; and briefly warning him of her intention, she called in Hollis. The mutually-kindled faces of these two persons showed that they had met before—in battle, as it seemed, and that with good memory of each other's personal courage. The moral courage of the one, however, was sunk with the consciousness of transgression; whilst that of the

Digitized by Google

other, brightened too by a generous purpose, shone on his open brow, and gave effect to the tone with which he pledged himself to faithful performance of the trust confided in him.

Not a moment now was to be lost, for Hollis had but the night hour for his hazardous task; and Eveleen feared she might not attain the house ere it was finally closed up — a ceremony, however, which was carelessly gone through ordinarily, from her frequent loitering out by moonlight in the shrubberies. Ere she went, one question, that had kept its station all the time in her heart, at last rose to her lips. She motioned Philips a little aside: — "Satisfy me, for Miss Trevanion's sake, if you may do so,— is Mr. Trevanion without companion in his cruel exile?"

"How do you mean, lady? He had his lady with him, —Heaven bless her gracious person!—when I left him."

Eveleen heard no more — questioned no more; the words she would have spoken were choked in the attempt of uttering them — she could only extend her now death-cold hand to Philips, who knelt down to kiss the hem of her mantle, exclaiming, with convul-

Digitized by Google

sive emotion, "May God's grace be ever with you, honoured lady! then you must be happy."

Eveleen was no longer herself—she had forgotten every thing, except the thunderbolt which had just fallen upon her secret hope, crushing it into dust: she looked, however, kindly and tearfully upon the object of her former great interest, and finding voice at last to commend him anew to Hollis and to Heaven, turned precipitately away.

Half an hour afterwards she found herself, she knew not how, in her own chamber: a sort of stunned sensation was over her mind and body; so that when she would have attempted to follow the hunted Philips in idea, or have imagined what better she could have done for him than she had done, her faculties failed in the effort.

Arundel Trevanion was married!—that truth appeared written in letters of fire wherever she looked: her heart, too, was stripped of those delusive veils which a lawless imagination, and she now thought an unconquered vanity, had wrapped it in. Why had she not seriously considered the probability of Mr. Trevanion's attachment to another as a decisive certainty?—Did

Digitized by Google

not every part of his private history tend to show that some young person of the other sex was blended with it?—Why had she not believed the report transmitted by Lord Woodvill?—And why had she given such fatal importance to the looks and tones of an admiration, which she could not but know her face and figure excited, and not always with damage to the admirer's peace? That the admiration in question had been of that harmless kind, seemed proved by the absence of all communication from the fugitive. "And how," she continued thinking, "could I fancy a livelier sentiment from him than gratitude?—Fie, fie on me! to wish for more, from a man who knows no more of me than what my face and a few fluttered words might reveal. Oh that I had known as little of him!—But I have been studying every line of his interesting character, and weaving my very soul into his fate, even before I saw him, for the last seven months." With her own disappointment, that of her friend was so closely knit, that she fluctuated some time between opposite purposes; deciding finally not to tell Aura of her brother's marriage, unless urgent necessity demanded it. To a sister

Digitized by Google

so bare a communication would be a source of misery rather than of joy; and Eveleen, therefore, thought it would be kinder to withhold than to impart the agitating fact. There was something of comfort to herself, in the recollection of the success with which she had parried her friend's past endeavour, to draw her into a confession of sharing her fond visions about the union of the two families. Womanly delicacy, for pride had small share in Eveleen's composition, was soothed by it; since, in truth, all she owned to of peculiar interest in the gallant unknown, was too playfully uttered to admit of a strong interpretation. But all this belonged principally to self; and our heroine, unaccustomed to rest in that, wrenched her thoughts away, to set them upon gathering up every fraction of Philips's remembered conversation, that she might have the more to tell her friend. She now blamed herself for having been too scrupulous about the propriety of unwitnessed visits to such a person; for having made those visits too hurriedly, for long confidence to be given her;—in short, she would fain, as we all do when momentous matters are over, have had the power of restoring time past, and

Digitized by Google

remodelling her conduct. This could not be; and she would not repine that a blessing had not been complete in all its parts. If Philips were safely got out of the kingdom, all else might be resigned without much merit in the resignation. Of this, however, Eveleen still had natural misgivings: almost wishing now that Colonel Trevanion were securely housed in Treverderet, she felt as careful housewives do when the hawk is abroad and some young brood wandering out of sight. Hollis had suggested sending in a few specimens of ore of his gathering, as if in humble offering to Miss Hungerford; but in reality to imply that her charge was happily delivered up to the adventurous fisherman at a near post, who had never yet betrayed a similar trust. Eveleen thought she was kept awake by this expectation: be the cause of her sleepless night what it might, she certainly slept not, and arose spiritless. Hollis's offering was her cordial: she blushed at the selfish regrets which had darkened her soul through so many hours; and bravely clearing the cloud, at least, from that countenance which usually sunned the sad thoughts of others, she hastened to the hermitage to remove any traces of residence left by Philips.

Digitized by Google

Lady Rhoda was still obstinate in her purpose of watching there through the whole night: but great ladies are apt to consider menials as nobodies; so that it surprised not Eveleen, to find that she was to have coffee waited upon by her page; and after his dismissal, the house-steward was just to bring her his accounts, that she might husband time properly; then her lamps would require looking to — her snuff-box would want filling; and, in brief, Lady Rhoda was not likely to have her courage put to so hard a test as her poor domestics, who would severally have to pass to and fro in the dead of night. It is supposed they found themselves an expedient, in an escort for each doomed person, of their whole body provided with "bell, book, and candle," and flanked by the parish clerk softly singing psalms.

Having disposed of every suspicious trifle, Eveleen found the bustle of her aunt's arrangements a convenient shelter for her own purposes, and during their settlement escaped into Treverderet unmissed.

She found her friend seated in the pretty chapel, with many adventitious comforts there, and a little collation spread out by

Digitized by Google

the nice hands of Susannah Hollis. Susannah only waited Miss Hungerford's arrival, to depart for the house, whence she was to return in two hours, with the little palfrey that had brought her lady out.

No sooner was she gone, than Eveleen had the grievous task of banishing her friend's animated look of expectation. Miss Trevanion's whole appearance was transformed for a moment by the unforeseen intelligence. She had been feasting on the prospect of hearing all a sister must yearn to know, of a beloved brother, and to see it vanish was a cruel shock of disappointment. It proved, however, but a shock; and after its first keen pang, her spirit rallied. She was, indeed, penetrated with the proofs of tender affection which her friend had given, in all she did to effect a meeting between her and Philips ere he went; and grateful to Providence, for his escape under such trusty guidance as that of Frank Hollis. This she expressed fervently, whilst wiping off the streaming tears from her cheeks, and calling on her friend to cease grieving for her.

Eveleen felt that she was not grieving solely for her friend; but she held down

Digitized by Google

her own regrets with a firm hand, and did, indeed, join in Miss Trevanion's agitated bursts of thankfulness for all that had been prosperous to them in this important business. When the excitement of high feeling began to betray human infirmity, it was then Eveleen's turn to bring forward arguments against despondency. These principally rested upon the active services of Lord Woodvill. Miss Trevanion was already aware, that information of a private nature could not pass safely to and fro by the ordinary post, at a time when the sacredness of a seal was little respected by great authorities: for which reason Eveleen said she had merely sent an indifferent billet to Lord Woodvill, referring him to the bearer for all she wished him to do for that person, at a dear friend's request. Philips's presentation of this billet, and Lord Woodvill's mere assent to her request, was all she expected to hear through the channel of the post-office: but with these she thought her friend might well rest in submitted expectation, and she herself expressed perfect confidence in the character she had applied to. She said this with sighing remembrance of her uncle Lake's gentle pertinacity in

Digitized by Google

urging Lord Woodvill's right to at least as fair a chance for her favour as other men; sighing, too, at the perverseness of circumstances, which had rendered her heart as perverse as themselves.

Both the friends in the Lady's Chapel had looked to their present evening there with a holiday feeling; recalling as it did the days of their first meetings, and lovely as the place was, with its many harmonies now of shaded groves, darkening river, and twilight sky: but the main purpose of their meeting blighted, minor sources of pleasure were little attended to; so that, for the first time since the renewal of their intimacy, they sat together for an interval in spiritless silence.

Miss Trevanion, who was looking on the sad, abstracted expression of her friend's countenance, observed aloud that she had lost much of her happy spirits, and would have penetrated into the secret cause of her present dejection, had not Eveleen hastened to avert the danger.

"In truth, I guess not what has become of my naughty spirits," she exclaimed. "I find they are mere butterflies, that will forth but in the sunshine; any cloud frights

Digitized by Google

them in, now-a-days. But they are back at your bidding. Let me sing to you and myself." With one of her sweetest smiles she snatched up Aura's lute, and beating it lightly with her hand, questioned what she should sing? — then, ere her friend had answered, awakened the echoes of wood, water, and cavern with her voice.

She sung Luther's Hymn, for her own feelings were not attuned to lighter music, nor did the solemn hour of twilight suit with such strains. As she sang, the tumults of her own bosom subsided, and Miss Trevanion's melted away in soft showers of tears. The devoted sister had memories within her, which vibrated to the slightest touch; the mellow sounds of her brother's bugle, which she used formerly to hear, and love to hear, floating back to her from his boat as it bore him far down the river, seemed revived in the rich swell and dying falls of Eveleen's voice; and his cherished image, for those happy moments, was again present to her.

There is no better medicine for some distempers of the soul, than well-chosen music. It may at first be allowed to enter the full current of the sick heart's feelings;

Digitized by Google

but after a while, a skilful player will know how to change its character, and so lead both heart and strain into a different channel. Eveleen's hymn had this effect: — it soothed herself — it soothed her companion; and by the time the sound of the little forester's hoofs were heard below, warning them to separate, Miss Trevanion was really cheerful, and Eveleen believed herself so. They parted with the pathetic adieus of youthful friendship, which innocently dresses itself so often in the garb of an affection that feels nothing moderately.

Hollis being now taken into some partnership with herself and friend, Miss Trevanion lay in wait for an opportunity after this, of talking alone with him on the subject of Philips, and enquiring if the poor fellow had sent any particular message to her by him. But Colonel Trevanion's embassy being successful, the family from Penzance came to stay two or three days at Treverderet, during which period Miss Trevanion was solely occupied with entertaining them — a task she went through with unexpected alacrity; first, from her great anxiety to please her father, and lastly, because she delighted in fancying one of

Digitized by Google

the daughters was fated to release her from the horror of being wedded to her cousin. Yet Dunbar conducted himself so ably throughout the business, that every one was deceived as to his real wishes. Aura thought he sincerely purposed to rid her of himself at any cost. The fair ladies of Trefusis flattered themselves singly with the idea of being the chosen one; Sir Fulk Trevanion believed his nephew was simply trying the game he had proposed for eliciting any latent partiality in Aura's breast; and every domestic in the castle privately prayed that the colonel's attentions to these visitors might irritate their master into sending him out of it.

No sooner was the Penzance party gone, than Miss Trevanion hastened to get speech at Frank Hollis. She had only to ask her father's leave to have some large boughs taken away from the chesnut trees surrounding the Lady's Chapel, which obstructed her view there, and to appoint Hollis for the task of lopping them. Sir Fulk, pleased with whatever excited harmless interest in his daughter and carried her into the open air, gave permission without hesitation; and soon afterwards

Digitized by Google

she was on the back of her docile palfrey, followed by Hollis, who undertook to act humbly the squire as well as woodman. Miss Trevanion continued sitting upon her manageable little steed, sheltered by many an overhanging bough from the blasts that swept by, whilst Hollis, occasionally using his wood knife to mark where the axe's stroke should follow, was giving her, in a low voice and as succinctly as possible, the particulars of Philips's eventful but at length prosperous landing on the Dutch coast, in the way it was reported to him by his coadjutor. Miss Trevanion, however disappointed at first, could not blame the discretion of Philips, when she gathered that he had confined himself, in his short journey under Hollis's care, to the most solemn assurances of his master being an injured man in every particular that had been used by his enemies to his ruin. She raised her swimming eyes to Hollis with a look of generous frankness that would have become Eveleen Hungerford, on assuring him she was happy to be his debtor for the great service he had rendered her; but would fain know if there were aught she could do to promote his happiness? Hollis,

Digitized by Google

in much confusion, and after some circumlocution, contrived to say, that all he presumed to wish at present was, that his honour, Sir Fulk, would be pleased to permit the acquaintance between his family and Mrs. Damaris Flavel. His mother, he said, had grievingly obeyed his honour's first command sent by Colonel Trevanion, and had told Mrs. Damaris she durst not receive any one from Rohesia. But his distant calls at Rohesia to enquire after the young gentlewoman's health, having been reported and forbidden also, he was driven that day to make this bold suit to Miss Trevanion.

Aura, who knew well what tempting offers he had refused from her friend, solely from scrupulous gratitude to his mother's early benefactor, was about to answer in a glow of indignant and kindly feelings, when the report of a gun caused her to look quickly up, and she saw her cousin on the hill above them, stooping for a jay he had just wantonly shot. Neither the act nor what she was replying to, were calculated to recommend him to any welcome from her eye; she withdrew it, without appearing to notice his presence or his salutation; and

Digitized by Google

hurrying her hooded mantle round her, silently touched her little palfrey, and putting him into a trot for the first time since she had ridden him, got back to the house before Dunbar could reach it to lift her off her saddle.

When they met afterwards at dinner, Colonel Trevanion appeared to have forgotten the incident, for he allowed Sir Fulk to question her kindly enough upon what damage she had done his old Spaniards, for so he called the sweet-chesnut trees, without taking a part in the discourse; but, upon the withdrawal of the servants, he began, as if in mere sport, rallying his fair cousin, upon his discovery of her taste for wood craft; and, having jested for a while, neither ungracefully nor offensively, upon that point, suddenly, though in the same tone, avowed his curiosity to know wherewith Master Francis Hollis had been entertaining her; for he never saw man speak with more earnest gesticulation, nor lady listen with deeper interest.

"I guessed not that our harmless pantomime was played before an envious audience!" Miss Trevanion replied incautiously, unable to restrain the bitterness of her feeling towards him.

Digitized by Google

"What exciteth your spleen, Aura?" enquired her father severely, removing his attention from Mr. Becket; "'twas a fair question, and required not so waspish an answer."

His daughter crimsoned at the rebuke, and bowing, with silent humility, the knight's displeasure would have ceased, had not Dunbar, whose curiosity had really been roused by the long conversation of Miss Trevanion with Hollis, which he had accidentally been brought to watch, resumed, with an air of thoughtless gaiety, that he would be sworn "the gentle woodman had been making some sort of love-suit to his fair coz; he only hoped that it was the veritable Frank Hollis, not any court gallant in his fustians."

Miss Trevanion knew not what to make of the flash which smote her from her father's eye. Her cousin exultingly saw in it the latent fear he had insinuated concerning Lord Villiers. Amazed as she was, she was yet sufficiently herself to perceive, that, unlucky as might be the present moment of such a petition, she had best prefer it now, and she therefore timidly repeated Hollis's suit for leave to see Mrs. Damaris

Digitized by Google

Flavel, either at his mother's cottage, or in Rohesia.

Sir Fulk received the petition in his worst humour, being a little mortified with himself, for having betrayed before witnesses the disagraceful suspicion which had lightened, though but for a moment, through his mind. He remarked, peevishly, upon the pernicious consequences which were sure to ensue, whenever a man was induced to depart, in the smallest degree, from a settled plan of conduct. His indulgence to her, he said, was already making confusion in what had hitherto gone on in dignified consistency: the tenants of the two estates no longer considered themselves divided by that high point of honour, or strength of duty, which used formerly to identify even a servant's friendship or enmity with those of his master's. He should now, he supposed, never dare to put his head into one of his cottages, without runing the risk of finding a Hungerford — Lady Rhoda, perhaps — paying a visit of inquisition, under fair pretences, to one of her cast-off waiting women. The Hollises had his orders, and if the foolish fellow Frank could not live without the damsel

Digitized by Google

that had smitten him, he should have his leave to accept Miss Hungerford's great offers, and make his marriage elsewhere. "I am much bounden to your friend, Aura," he added, in a softer tone, "who seems, in truth, a modest, well-conditioned young gentlewoman — her cheerfulness has wrought much good upon your spirits and your health — if other things pleasure me too, not long hence, I shall know how——"

Miss Trevanion's instant change of colour gave the clue to Dunbar: as if in haste to end that emotion, which her father's hint about him evidently excited, he exclaimed, rather abruptly, "that he hoped there was nothing serious in the worthy Hollis's fancy for the pretty mistress Damaris, since there was a report about, of her being subject to fits of insanity."

This observation drew him into a detail of what he had learnt from a gamekeeper where he was shooting that day; and this containing the account of Mistress Flavel's two apparitions, most ludicrously multiplied and prefigured, and Lady Rhoda Brandon's pompous watching for what he called the last in the ghostly procession, Sir Fulk's anger was turned into mirth, in which even

Digitized by Google

the quiet Mr. Becket could not help joining, so great were Colonel Trevanion's powers of entertaining when it suited him to do so.

Miss Trevanion's disturbed countenance, the blood literally throbbing through her cheeks, passed with her father for the sign of feelings, chafed by a ridicule which obliquely glanced at her friend; but her cousin suspected more in it, and tried to elicit what the cause might be, by sporting with the idea of voluntary hermits for the love of fair ladies; professing his wonder, that Lady Rhoda had not disturbed the nest of one of the charming Eveleen Hungerford's turtles.

Miss Trevanion felt disorder and alarm pouring in upon her; and wisely afraid of being entrapped into some imprudence of speech, only smiled at her cousin's jests, and pleading weariness, craved permission to retire for an hour's repose.

After she was gone, Dunbar assumed a graver tone, lamenting, with much seeming truth, that such a misfortune should have befallen so valuable a servant as Hollis, as that of conceiving an affection for a half-crazed creature; attributing it wholly to

Digitized by Google

his having conveyed her from Dorsetshire out of mere humanity, and regretting that their near neighbourhood would make it very hard for the poor fellow to conquer his passion.

"If I knew where to bestow the silly knave for awhile—" half ejaculated the knight.

Colonel Trevanion's purpose was now gained; it behoved him to keep Damaris Flavel from becoming the wife of one so shrewd and honest as Frank Hollis, who would quickly fathom the cause of her ghost-seeing; and he, therefore, suggested giving him a commission to execute in London, which, in itself inconsequent, might be spun out to any length his master chose.

To this proposal Sir Fulk gave instant assent; and, shortly after this, Hollis was despatched upon a specious errand to the capital, in the company of Colonel Trevanion's body-servant, who knew enough of his master, to guess, when he jocularly told him it would be a good deed to ease the poor rustic of his fancy for a lunatic, that he need not be scrupulous about the means.

Away then, to his own and others immediate regret, went the simple-minded and

Digitized by Google

pure-hearted Hollis; little aware that, by the machinations of a heartless villain, and in consequence of obstinate selfishness in the person who sent him, he was about to be exposed to the hottest fire of every temptation which assails ardent, unsuspecting youth in a vicious metropolis.

The removal of Hollis, as it bore no marks of being done in displeasure, was not a matter of further regret to Eveleen Hungerford and her friend, than as it took one tried person from their vicinity, and proved that Sir Fulk was ready to accept the poor fellow's sacrifice of inclination to reverence and gratitude. There had, however been much of irritability displayed by the knight, and of wily adroitness by Dunbar during the conversation with Miss Trevanion, which preceded this seemingly trifling removal; and Eveleen, when told of the scene, saw that they must stand on guard against Colonel Trevanion, who was evidently looking with a jealous eye upon their combined and separate movements. When she heard the poor sister count the weeks, with a sickening dread of Dunbar's heirship being made irrevocable before Mr. Trevanion's innocence of treason could

Digitized by Google

be proved. How did she wish herself a man, that instead of waiting the chances of winds, or the speed of another person, she might end her own and her friend's suspense, by passing over to the continent at once, and putting a strong hand to the work now committed to a heady servant, and a young man like Lord Woodvill, who could have no other interest in seeing justice done to a stranger than what the degree of his natural benevolence would ensure! As it was, she anticipated a painful delay of satisfaction on this subject: distance and proprieties imposed so many shackles, and opposed as many obstacles to its quick settlement. Lord Woodvill, too, would have much difficulty in finding time for a steadily pursued enquiry; from his humane attendance upon her cousin's dying hours, and his worthy interest in the simple girl, so soon likely to be widowed in a foreign land.

At the thought of this near kinsman's probable dissolution, and the stormy scenes likely to follow from the arrogant pride dominant in her aunt, she saw with horror visitor after visitor arrive at Rohesia, and heard the state apartments ordered to be

Digitized by Google

got ready for the Prince d' Este, who had promised to pay a farewell visit to his hospitable entertainers there, in company with its lord.

Eveleen smiled at her aunt's extravagant visions concerning this visit; yet sighed too to think how changed she was since the period in which, gay and blooming as the month they met in, she had sported herself with D'Este's reserved admiration of her, and felt wickedly tempted to force it into more obvious expression. That she was sorry for such youthful vanity need scarcely be added.

Eveleen was right: changed indeed she was since her last words with Philips. When not roused to animate her friend, she was no more the enlivening principle of all within her own home. The sweet wild singing of youth at its pleasant tasks, was no longer heard from the gardens of Rohesia; the bright face no longer looked out from its windows or bowers, with glad and kindly welcoming: the social heart, in truth, had ceased to be social, pining for solitude; and that, not as in days past, to fly from flippant tongues, to the silent wisdom of books, but to sit for uncounted hours think-

Digitized by Google

ing of what she wept to think on; or to give herself an excuse for depression, by vainly trying to make Lady Rhoda see that her daughter was daily appearing less and less able to bear the fatigue of incessant company.

Amusement of every kind was so agreeable to Lady Villiers, that, as all her fatigue arose from sitting up too far into the night, she joined in treating her occasional languor and pain, as ordinary things in her situation; and Eveleen's warnings, therefore, were unattended to. But neither Lady Villiers's thoughtlessness nor Lady Rhoda's triumphant spirits were destined for long continuance: a courier from Brussels, who must have quitted that place before Lord Carraton could have half reached it, arrived at Rohesia, with tidings of Lord Hungerford's death.

To Lady Rhoda, the only sorrowful part of the news was, that her nephew had left the unfortunate dupe of his arts, with a legal claim to a rank equal with her own; and that such a claim allowed, must legitimatize the child which his widow expected to bring into the world at the distance of some months.

In so great a crisis Lady Rhoda's pre-

Digitized by Google

sence of mind completely failed: the probability of an heir from such a hateful union she had never suffered her mind to contemplate; and when she found her mistake, her rage and resentment rose to such a pitch, that their exciting cause could not be concealed; so that by the time she recovered her senses, every person in and about Rohesia knew that pretty Agnes Trevor was the lawful wife of their young lord.

At the news of a death, all the visitants took wing, faster than birds scared by the report of a gun. Eveleen hurried as fast, to the desolate abode of Agnes's parents, in compliance with the request of Lord Woodvill, in a respectful billet to herself. The widowed Lady Hungerford, he said, wished her parents to know that she had never intentionally caused them shame; — that, unable to write herself, she long believed her lord had told them of their stolen marriage after it was made; — and that it was only of late she had discovered, to her sorrow, how cruelly Lord Hungerford's passion for her had stifled his conscience upon many occasions; — that she humbly prayed her parents to endure yet awhile longer the dubious colour given to her character, lest, by unbecoming haste in pro-

Digitized by Google

claiming her rights, they might prevent her lord's family from doing her the voluntary grace of inviting her home, or placing her abroad for improvement, under their avowed protection.

Eveleen guessed the original prompter of this delicate proceeding; but adopted by the poor Agnes, it might well have the merit of a spontaneous act. She was touched by the mild nature it developed; and more pleased that Lord Woodvill, by intrusting Miss Hungerford to undertake the commission he durst not ask of Lady Rhoda or Lady Villiers, was taking the first step in his proposed reciprocity of friendly sympathies and services.

The date of the letter, and the absence of all hint that could be construed into an allusion to Philips, convinced Eveleen that the latter had not then, nor indeed could he, without a miracle, have seen the noble writer.

The Trevors having long since quitted the paternal domain of their daughter's betrayer, Eveleen had to seek them at the very extremity of that wild common where she first encountered the fugitives in gipsy disguise. It would be unwarrantably

Digitized by Google

blackening of a profligate, already dark enough, to say that he had not endeavoured to make them some reparation in the form of transmitted money. But this the father had taken back, and left at the gate of Rohesia, with a stern message; since when, Eveleen had only seen those poor people when she went to sorrow with them.

The sight of their holy joy, for such it may be called, was the happiest moment she had known since her first meeting with Aura. It was a beloved child's resurrection to them; and their gratitude directed itself first, though in the homeliest language, to its highest object; then turned with blessings to Eveleen. They expressed themselves contented, either to die with their present measure of joy, or to live and see their poor girl again owned or disowned by the noble family upon which she was now grafted.

They kept their promise of silence, for they gave one cheerfully; but the strange romance could not be prevented from spreading with the news of Lord Hungerford's death, by the agency of astonished servants, to whom Lady Rhoda's violence had revealed it, ere she recovered sense to command their secrecy.

Digitized by Google

Sir Fulk Trevanion having heard the tale during a ride, repeated it to his daughter in no tone of triumph: not that he was insensible to the effect such a humiliating event would produce upon the crumbling power of the rival house; but the disastrous sympathy of his fate, as a father, with that of his enemy, unconsciously awed him, and caused him, for once, to feel, whilst contemplating Lord Carraton, a sentiment more akin to compassion than to contempt.

The worthy sentiment was speaking in his eye as he unexpectedly encountered Miss Hungerford, at the door of his daughter's apartment: her look acknowledged it, and the courtesy of his lifted hat, as she passed and entered.

Penetrated with the tidings she had just heard, and seeing their effect upon the saddened aspect of her friend, Miss Trevanion forgot her own immediate concerns, to offer such comfort as she would have wished given to herself under similar circumstances. Her surprise was great, when she learnt that Eveleen considered the marriage of her cousin, rather as a blessing than a blot. Her surprise increased, when she found that the latter's clouded aspect arose from the

Digitized by Google

fear of Lady Rhoda's success in the object of a second journey she had undertaken. That indefatigable spirit was posting up to court, to enter *her* protest against the misalliance of her nephew; declaring, that if her brother was too timid to attempt the matter himself, she meant to petition his majesty to have the validity of the marriage looked into; so that it might, if possible, be set aside, either on the ground of being done without consent of parents, or upon the assumption of Hungerford's temporary aberration of intellect. In that case the unborn babe of Agnes Trevor would be illegitimated; and Eveleen, as the only child of Lord Carraton's second brother, must succeed to whatever honours and properties were entailed upon females.

To her sighing repetition of these cruel purposes, our heroine was nearly as much ashamed to add, that she guessed upon good grounds Lady Rhoda had some scheme in hand for reviving the family consequence by her aggrandizement, which pointed to the Prince d'Este, of whom rumours were rife, setting her wind-mill brain immediately at work.

Either as a cloak to graver matters of

Digitized by Google

negociation, or really to advance his queen's kinsman, King James had recently sent a pompous embassy to Rome, to solicit a cardinal's hat for the prince; and, strange to say, the latter had peremptorily protested against accepting the boon so obtained.

They who had seen most of Prince Isidore, since his stay in England, declared it their belief, that so unexpected an act sprung from true nobility of nature, ambitious only of wearing honours fairly won; whilst others attributed it to the common folly of yielding up brilliant prospects, for a love dream. Lady Rhoda Brandon, — who in her own person was the last in the world to feel the tyranny of any tender affection, — chose to believe that her niece had acquired this absolute power over the illustrious foreigner; and that by making her a *partie* fit for a prince, and placing her hand at the disposal of his majesty, she would have performed a master-stroke.

Miss Trevanion's rooted prejudices of blood and breeding, were strongly shaken by the kindlier habits of thought, and higher-pitched honour of her friend; so that once convinced of Agnes Trevor's chastity and artlessness, and of the base

Digitized by Google

treachery practised against her, she became sincerely interested in her final enjoyment of her rights: but she listened with much emotion to details of Lady Rhoda's preposterous views; principally, because Eveleen, with thronging sighs, blamed herself for having, by her evident disinclination to Lord Woodvill at one time, and her complete avowal against him at a later period, left her aunt free to form any such speculation for her as the present. Miss Trevanion's fondest wishes were always wounded, whenever she thought her friend willing in good earnest to meet Lord Woodvill, even a step, on the way to a renewal of their early bond; and something of apprehension from the accomplished Italian, should he, in truth, seek Eveleen's love, stole into her breast. A throb of pride followed this uneasy feeling; and, for once, in Eveleen's company, she felt a pain she would not communicate. Having smothered it, however, she congratulated herself upon the agreeable certainty of Lady Rhoda's most convenient absence again, by which happy accident their meetings were not likely to be perplexed by her offensive interference; and, pleasing themes opened,

Digitized by Google

the remainder of Eveleen's visit passed, as usual, in sweet fellowship.

Decorum now closed the gates of Rohesia against visitors. Lady Villiers every day lay longer in bed of mornings, and loitered more in the act of dressing; so that Eveleen was neither wanted nor missed, till quite late enough in the afternoon for her to have spent an hour or two at Treverderet. She now went and came there, in her sable suit, with unchecked punctuality: Miss Trevanion began to take walking exercise, leaning upon her arm, either into the open park, or between the glittering alleys of her mother's garden, where the scarlet berries of the holly, and crimson ones of the yew, were burnished by a noonday sun.

The month of October was nearly ended, and the friends trod paths covered with fallen leaves, now changing their bright auburn colour and present dryness, for the sad hue and damp slipperiness which precedes their dissolving into soil.

There is a tenderness and loveliness in the first steps of autumn, as though she mourned her approach to the couch of dying summer: but when she begins to fly

Digitized by Google

before coming winter, it is with shrill cries, and dishevelled tresses.

Wailing blasts had already begun to give warning of her departure, to the friends, who now courted every bland air; and Eveleen, therefore, often found herself obliged to exchange their sweet saunterings, even the evergreen arbour itself, for Miss Trevanion's apartment, To guard against suites of harassing speculations when there, they agreed to bind themselves to a very frugal share of talk upon the subject most interesting to them; and, in the pursued reading of Spenser's Fairy Queen, they found a delightful spell for detaining roused thought and feeling.

Such a study was so in unison with the taste and habits of Sir Fulk Trevanion, that whenever he saw the large volume of this bard of chivalry lying on his daughter's table, carefully opened each day for its sweet reader, and questioned Aura upon their mutual impressions of its rare beauties, he ceased to think of the daily bouquet of choice exotics, which he saw in china vases beside it, and which it fretted him to know, came out of Lord Carraton's Italian garden.

Digitized by Google

But even Sir Fulk would not have wished such bouquets ungiven, could he have seen the pleasure with which they were gathered by the loving friend of his child. Eveleen delighted in gratifying her dear companion's passion for flowers, at a time when all, save green-house plants, have ceased blowing; and culling for her, blossoms of every scent and hue from the endless conservatories and orangeries at Rohesia, for once acknowledged the value of those luxuries.

Every trivial attention is precious when it gives even momentary pleasure to a sick heart, or when it diverts one anxious feeling. Eveleen assiduously sought to distract Miss Trevanion's mind from that intense watching for the termination of certain pending interests, which, if not regulated, would prove as pernicious to her health, as the utter darkness from which she had just been drawn. Her kindly cares and exerted cheerfulness, coming in aid of Susannah Hollis's more restrained acts of duty, gently stimulated both the nerves and the spirits of her patient, so that Sir Fulk Trevanion no longer felt himself in an atmosphere of gloom in his own house, nor feared to look on his daughter lest the hopeless expres-

Digitized by Google

sion of her aspect should pierce him with remembrance of his son. It was impossible for him not to perceive that he was mainly indebted for this to the visits of Lord Carraton's niece; but however revolting Eveleen's image was under that title, it became more gracious as he flattered himself that the spirits she had restored would one day exert themselves with willing alacrity to please the husband of his choice. Under such impressions he gave the friends every facility for pursuing undisturbed their innocent recreations; and whilst he found his own stern wrath against his son drooping down into silent melancholy, wished that he too could find comfort in the toys of amusement, which he presumed consoled his feebler child.

The fever of pride and violence was, indeed, subsiding in Sir Fulk; and with them went many of their delirious visions: he was beginning to feel that nothing he had attained, or might attain, could bring him abiding peace. The plague-spot was on his family in Arundell's outlawry; and the total degradation of his powerful neighbour, nay, the recovery of the barony itself, could not make up for lasting ignominy.

Digitized by Google

That he should cut an offending son off for ever from inheritance, and bestow it on a worthier kinsman, might satisfy a high notion of parental sovereignty; but the greatest devotion to justice could not silence the yearnings of memory, over plans and prospects, of which that alien son had been the object.

Dunbar did not fill the chasm, Arundell's expulsion from his father's affection had left: for though the former had become essentially necessary to the knight, by his tact and talent at confusing all his uncle's perceptions of duty and honour, he did not kindle that heart-glow, which requires no recapitulation of its object's merits, to break into a blaze, and which it is the property of true virtue only, to create.

Sir Fulk sometimes believed it was the very waywardness of his own destiny, which kept him from feeling this lively satisfaction in his nephew's devotedness; and ever jealous of his dignity, decided, that regrets for a contumacious son, ought to be mortified and expiated, by the most determined adoption of his new heir. Thus he still looked to an union between his nephew and daughter, as an event which his honour

Digitized by Google

was pledged to bring about if possible. Perhaps the knight hoped to find in their children, some permitted resting-place for his harassed affections; some recompense for having gone too far—if so it should prove—with the insidious court party. That he was entangled in something like a chain by it, he began to suspect. In the days of Arundell's companionship with him, nay, until Dunbar had incited his uncle to revive the disputed question of the barony under the new reign, Sir Fulk knew he had always acted freely, with or against the court: now he was pledged to certain acts, by way of grateful return for present graces, and bribes for others in expectation. These acts already made him suspected of a strong bias towards popery: his severity against his son, and his acceptance of a post under the crown, at a time when most protestant patriots kept aloof to watch the principles of their prince ere they would take office under him, were fair grounds for suspicion. But in this Sir Fulk Trevanion was misjudged: his disorder of grief and violence had been taken cruel advantage of in the king's closet, when he was told there of his son's presence in the

Digitized by Google

camp of Monmouth. James had added to this direful news, information equally false, but more completely manufactured by creatures who knew their master would not sift narrowly what he wished not to hear disproved, nor an irritated father think of disputing with his sovereign. Sir Fulk saw, with horror, that his only son, if taken in arms against the existing government, might perish like a common malefactor; or living, and inheriting Treverderet, would transmit it to the children of Lady Harriet Wentworth's base-born daughter. Either prospect was too abhorrent: and the knight purchased the king's promise of sparing the first infamy to the family of Trevanion, and showed his own eagerness to escape the latter, by pledging himself to adopt his nephew. It was not till afterwards, that the opiate for awakening thought was administered, in the intimation of favourably revising the affair of the barony upon the old evidence.

This seductive proposition was at first accepted only in part; for Sir Fulk, in the early stages of his apostacy from lofty principle, could ill brook the consciousness of regaining a right, without the capacity of

Digitized by Google

proving that right beyond question: but now that constant disappointments forced him to abandon all expectation of discovering new documents, it entered into his daily meditations. Pride, and conscience, desire to have, and dread of shame in getting, stirring up all within him to a perpetual conflict.

His public duties, the consequences of the post he had accepted, it must be owned with some view to increase his funds for the mad suit he contemplated, were not extensive enough to give him much wholesome occupation. He was often in the public eye, it is true, and he had at once the business and the importance of large patronage. All would not do; he felt that he was no longer the independent gentleman he had been: his sense of enthralment was, moreover, gradually aggravated by kindling displeasure at the insincere conduct of the king and his government. Sir Fulk could not shut his eyes against the tendency of many public measures emanating from that quarter. Ever since their exulting conclusion of the Scotch and English rebellions, more open show was made by the creatures of James of their wish to render him absolute over the consciences and properties of

Digitized by Google

his subjects. And although Sir Fulk's protestantism was rather a point of honour with him than an enlightened principle, it was sufficiently strong to make him revolt from the bare idea of permitting a rival church to be set up in the stead of that wherein he had been educated. Thus his conscience and his interest, or rather that fancied interest which he attached to the recovery of the barony, became at variance; rendering him by fits and starts, moody or vehement, when circumstances forced upon him the stinging apprehension that those who had voted for the exclusion of James Duke of York from the throne, had not misjudged him.

This apprehension, fretfully expressed at times, joined to an increasing coldness towards certain cabinet counsellors, and repeated injunctions to his nephew to hold himself in parliament strongly by the side of the church, gave token that he would not be easily led to abandon the faith he had been nurtured in. Dunbar, therefore, saw that he must ward off at all risks his cousin Aura's desperate disclosure of his secret intercourse with Father Peters, and be greatly cautious himself in the manner with

Digitized by Google

which he should set her free from their implied ties.

It was partly to propitiate her, partly to bring Miss Hungerford closer to his eye, that he had seconded the proposal for admitting her at Treverderet; but, except by the effect those visits wrought upon Aura, he had no means of ascertaining the nature of the discoveries between them. Miss Trevanion kept so aloof from his particular society, and was so little different in her coldness, that he knew not how to suppose she could have learnt aught from her friend, beyond the ordinary rumours on the subject, that might bring her to question the justice of her brother's outlawry. Unless Damaris Flavel had read the papers she got from Lord Gray, and revealed their contents to his lady, how could Miss Hungerford know that Gray de Wark had so testified to the unstained integrity of Arundell? Monmouth's dying testimony to the same effect, had been given only before three persons, most deeply interested in suffocating it:—one, that subtle and ambitious jesuit, who, in confiding the secret to Dunbar, did it but to quicken his speed in securing the power which was afterwards

Digitized by Google

to be exerted at the will of the popish party. Although tolerably sure at present of the frightened Mrs. Favel's discretion, he foresaw, from the very excess of her fright, that it would end; and it was incumbent upon him, therefore, to prepare some neutralizing agent to act upon her accusation.

This could only be done by habituating his uncle to believe that there was more under Miss Hungerford's romance of friendship, than either she possibly, or her friend certainly, dreamt of; he remarked, that the complaisance of suffering their fair niece to enter by favour, a house hitherto interdicted to them, argued some interested view in the great courtier and his scheming sister.

"As it could not be," so he said, with doubtful emphasis, "to counteract the knight in his proceedings towards one unhappily estranged from all who once built fond hopes on him, and in secret revenge of their present slights from the court, it might have another aim, that of engrafting their withering branches upon the invigorated stem of the Trevanion tree."

Dunbar spoke often in this strain; sometimes gravely, sometimes in lively sallies,

Digitized by Google

intimating the discourtesy both he and his uncle were guilty of to the admired niece of Lord Carraton, who was perhaps trained to the agreeable task of reconciling the rival houses, and not unwilling either to take her friend's lover off her hands, or to win the glory of bringing the lofty master of Treverderet himself, to her feet.

It was not difficult to insinuate some suspicion of one or other of these projects, into the mind of a man who was previously filled with inflated notions of his own consequence — who knew himself to be still a noble ruin; and thought his nephew, likely enough to captivate the eye of a young lady used to grace and gallantry, and fond of finding it in her admirers. He knew nothing of Miss Hungerford's half-engagement; nor so much of her character as would have convinced him she could not have been pitched upon by Lord Carraton for the principal in a scheme of reuniting the families by a merely political marriage. The idea startled him, therefore; and if his pride were propitiated by such obvious humbling of his old antagonist, he became proportionately on his guard against machinations, which it needed little art in Dunbar to make him suspect

Digitized by Google

might have the further motive of cajoling him from his purpose of re-trying the great suit.

As such imaginations thickened within him, he began to listen more coldly to his daughter's details of her morning employment in concert with her friend; he no longer showed gracious approval, when he heard that Eveleen talked with sweet ardour upon every subject that roused noble enthusiasm: her kindly notice of his domestics, nay, even her silent courtesy to himself and his nephew, when casually encountering her, were regarded by him with jealous mistrust; and his determination to end all intimacy between his dependants and those of Lord Carraton, was evinced by the protracted absence of poor Hollis.

His uncle's mind, thus expectant of some latent mischief, in which the Rohesian family would play the first part, Colonel Trevanion stood upon a vantage ground, of which Aura and Eveleen were unsuspicious, ready to repel the attack they might make either jointly or singly against him.

Some dangers, however, of which he was not aware, and others over which he could have no control, were beginning to gather

Digitized by Google

around him. The violent proceedings of the judicial commission, yet carrying on in the counties where the rebellion had broken out, revolted the high and honourable feelings of Sir Fulk Trevanion, who, from the noblest habit of high birth, was accustomed to consider himself one of the hereditary protectors of the lowly. He thought punishments should now cease; and the deluded favourers of an enterprise so disastrous, be left to repair their errors by voluntary obedience to the existing power. He was outraged by the encouragement given to spies and informers, and the cruel measure dealt to women, for assisting in the concealment of dear relations or former benefactors. The knight's remonstrances were not well received at Whitehall; and he was not of a spirit to brook their repulse: thus bitternesses were commencing between him and the court,—a circumstance of evil augury for Dunbar, who rested principally upon his uncle's weaned affection from the common people. The rumour too was gaining ground amongst the gentry and peasantry, that Mr. Trevanion had never appeared personally in the late rebellion; and although no one had yet presumed to

Digitized by Google

speak upon the forbidden subject to the knight, when they had only rumour to justify them, who was to say what effect such a report might produce, if bruited to him now, when out of humour with the sovereign by whom he was declared a traitor? All this whetted the impatience of Dunbar, for the termination of the period allotted for Miss Trevanion's decision. Yet was he too well acquainted with the temper he had to deal with, to venture on precipitate measures: although having to do also with a light-headed mistress, an imperious priest, and a rash prince, he found nothing more difficult than preserving his, and their aims, from sudden ruin. His sole object was to get the inheritance of Treverderet legally fixed upon himself, that, come what might, no after discovery could unsettle it. The court views were not only to keep Arundell Trevanion and his offspring in poverty as well as exile, but to build up a strong Roman Catholic interest in Cornwall, by matching the new heir of Treverderet with the daughter of some noble house professing that faith.

Had Father Peters alone managed these two interests, no danger would have

Digitized by Google

threatened them; but the king's blind pursuit of both at once, and the levity with which Lady Dorchester enjoyed alternate mocking complaisances to her royal lover, and panic-striking her humbler favourite, every day increased Dunbar's difficulty in managing his sensitive uncle. He was, however, within sight of land: another few months, and he might spring to shore, and leave all the barks that had conveyed him thither, to drift at will down any current. It only behoved him to act the humble suitor and rational churchman well enough to cheat his uncle into a belief that he did it in earnest; yet to keep his cousin assured that he meant not to break his secret compact with her. This he certainly did so ably, that Sir Fulk flattered himself his daughter's increasing cheerfulness was a sign of a warmer feeling towards her cousin, than what her natural shyness permitted her to display; and Miss Trevanion believed, that to save herself from a hateful marriage, she need not plunge into the fearful ruin of confessing to her father the step she had taken in London.

It may seem strange, that Dunbar, who had begun to seek the estates of his uncle

Digitized by Google

solely to gratify certain propensities and habits, should, in the pursuit of that end, be able, not only to suspend such habits, but to forget them entirely; so that the lily-like prettiness of Damaris Flavel, the rustic bloom of Susannah Hollis, and the enchantments of Eveleen Hungerford's face and figure, did not make him pause for a single instant. In fact, a new appetite had been awakened in him, by the nature of the very game he played. Greediness to possess a thing followed with such ardour through unlooked for difficulties, wholly superseded lower desires, and made him see only the person of an enemy, in each of the three objects that had otherwise detained his lawless fancy.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IV.

Lord Carraton returned from his journey, more mortified by having gained a daughter than grieved at the loss of a son. Yet afflicted he was, because that son would have inherited those honours and estates, which must now either fall to the offspring of a peasant's daughter, or be parcelled out between oblivion and his niece Eveleen.

Avoiding Cornwall, he went directly to the capital in a most unenviable state of doubt, whether to sanction his sister's proceedings, and so for ever terminate the earldom of Carraton; or let the marriage remain unquestioned, and keep the widow of his son at a distance upon an annuity, at pleasure, until the birth of the expected child; which if born alive, whether male or female, might then be taken from her, and brought up suitably to its prospects.

This difficult question, embarrassed by many faint movements of nature and conscience in the earl, continued to be discussed privily between the brother and

Digitized by Google

sister for some short time; during which period, Eveleen could give nothing more active, than inward prayers that selfish power might not prevail over right. She learnt, however, from Lady Villiers's correspondence with her mother, that Lord Woodvill proved a formidable obstacle to the unjust proceeding advocated by Lady Rhoda: he not only peremptorily refused to admit, that he had ever witnessed the slightest wandering of reason in Lord Hungerford, during his attendance upon his dying state, but warned all concerned, of his resolution to pass over into England, and, if need required, stand forth as the widow's protector. Permission had been refused him, on this, to convey the body of Lord Hungerford from Holland to its final rest in the burying-place of the family; it was now coming, therefore, closed up in a leaden coffin, and thrust amongst other heavy articles into the hold of a merchant vessel, as little regarded as they; and attended, as even the noblest corses are, when left for mercenary guardians and hired mourners.

Eveleen, with a throbbing heart, imagined the probability of soon seeing Lord Wood-

Digitized by Google

vill, and hearing from his lips all she wished to know—principally now for her friend's sake—of Arundell Trevanion. But another probability agitated her: he might urge in person, more seriously, what his late letters had half jestingly intimated; and if he should have contributed aught to the object of Miss Trevanion's wishes, if he should have entered so heartily into the interests of the exiled Arundell as to hazard his own fortune or reputation—approved as he was by her uncle Lake, and nobly as his character had developed since arrived at manhood—how should she be able to plead against him, to himself and to her honoured uncle, the venial folly of their first meeting; giving it as a reason why he must never hope to win her affections? To make present use of his services, and not to reward him afterwards, appeared at once base and ungrateful. And for whose sake was she thus abhorrent of marriage with the chosen of her father?—for a man's, who, if he were indeed Arundell Trevanion, was doubly divided from her—by the enmity of their families, and by his sacred bonds with another.

Was he indeed Arundell Trevanion?

Digitized by Google

This was a question Eveleen now began to ask herself again and again. Manifold are the artifices by which love maintains its empire over young hearts. Hitherto our poor heroine had rested her self-defending plea, for the weakness she felt within her, upon the fact of having ever united in her mind the known character of Mr. Trevanion with the mien and manners of the noble stranger. Now she tried to believe that they were not the same men: and memory was therefore tasked incessantly, to discover reasons for discrediting, what she fondly wished and fancied true, only a few short weeks ago.

There was no surer way of ending, what she called the unwise and unmaidenly strife in her heart, than by getting sight of the portrait which her friend in Treverderet was as eager to see once more, as she was; but as Sir Fulk's humour, of late, had not been inviting, Miss Trevanion did not venture to ask his leave to show her visitor the relics of antiquity in the house, until the very morning of a day upon which he and Colonel Trevanion were going out on horseback for a long excursion; and then, he had gone without answering her.

Digitized by Google

She had gathered from Mrs. Pendarves, that the banished picture was in one of the upper rooms; the old lady herself knew not which, being deterred from satisfying her affectionate curiosity by awe of her master's displeasure. She only remembered having seen Mr. Becket take it there, and noticed that it was wrapped up in dark cloth. Satisfied by this information, Miss Trevanion went through the ceremony — for such it was to both in their present state of feeling — of taking her friend over all the lower suites, before she ascended with her to the remote part of the house where old furniture, and paintings repudiated from their vile imitation of nature, were thrust out of sight and left to the moth and worm; whilst worthier memorials, preserved with reverence for deceased relations' sakes, were seen carefully papered up, and ticketed with their names and dates.

The first region of dark and gloom, through which the friends went whisperingly and apprehensively, although unconscious of aught to fear, was such a mere repository for lumber, ancient and modern, as waste and idleness create in every house. Things put away for the moment, and for-

Digitized by Google

gotten; or remembered, and left, because their total destruction does not appear worth the trouble of effecting.

In this chamber a troop of players might have furnished themselves with what they call properties, of no mean value and variety; for damaged state chairs, and canopies, dilapidated mirrors, faded court suits, odd bits of the armour (then modern), buff gloves, spoilt fishing-tackle, and torn books, strewed the floor and filled the corners.

"A very battle-field of that cruel conqueror Time!" exclaimed Miss Hungerford, with a tone better suited to the sentiment than to the lightly-constructed exclamation. She paused, a second or two, with downward eye and upward thought; then added, "How one might moralize here, Aura! — All, by whom these things of various ages were once familiarly used, are now sleeping in that large bed, the grave. Oh the question! — If we do indeed sleep there? or if the spirit be awake, looking on its final home of bliss or bale?" She turned her eye towards her friend with the enquiring expression that was in her voice; but Aura Trevanion had not heard the enquiry; she was looking around with

Digitized by Google

flooded eyes, thinking of many a sportive visit to this very chamber in the days of her brother's companionship, and many a scene from Shakspeare's dramas gone through together, in habits culled from the motley heaps, with all the enthusiasm of realizing imaginations. Eveleen would have considered it a species of sacrilege to have disturbed this trance of memory; and gliding to one of the dim windows, she looked through it upon the outward scene; — the stretch of parks and woods, the wild shore of the river, the rushing stream itself, and the melancholy haze gathering over its surface. She was conscious to a great alteration in the feeling with which she contemplated all that formed a part of Treverderet. But a short time back, she felt a sort of property in every thing; a faint presentiment that some day the various objects there, would become subjects of her cherishing care. Now, she looked on the wide domain, as a place in which she had no lot or part, — and she sighed to think it; because, still, the habit of identifying her brave unknown, with the brother of her friend, was unbroken.

Echoing Eveleen's sigh, without exactly

Digitized by Google

guessing its import, Miss Trevanion roused up from her reverie, and opening another chamber, passed into it. This was the receptacle for discarded pictures. Spurious Holbeins, Zucheros, and Vandykes, were severally turned or lifted in vain: at length Miss Trevanion caught sight of some large dark object apart from the others; she ran to it, and tried to pull off the wrapper in which it was bound; but it was sewed tightly on: her scissors hung at her side, according to the fashion of that day, and snatching them off, she quickly run them up the stretch of cloth. Her eyes — her impatience — her very silence, while doing this, prepared Eveleen for the sight of Arundell Trevanion's portrait, and she drew to her side with an emotion nearly as obvious as her own. As the severed cloth fell asunder, the trembling sister threw herself forward, sealing her lips upon the brow, as if it were the real forehead of her brother she was kissing; her outstretched arms clasped the senseless canvass, and her bosom heaved against it with a mixed feeling of grief and joy. All things were forgotten by her, except the dear brother, who seemed again in her embraces. Her fitful

Digitized by Google

weeping, only interrupted by passionate apostrophes to the mute object before her, at length subsided, and raising her head, she directed an eager glance at her friend.

Eveleen Hungerford was fixed before the picture. The young, breathing, deeply expressive face she saw represented there, was not that of the unknown; it was all a fond sister had so often described; but it was not the vivid countenance she longed, yet feared, to see again. A full relieving sigh burst from her bosom, and something of satisfaction appeared breaking through the bewildered expression of her features.

"Eveleen!" ejaculated Miss Trevanion, "is it — is it —" she could not finish the question.

Eveleen shook some bright drops from her eye, doubtful whether she were glad or sorry, and attempting to speak without faltering — "Our stars are wiser than ourselves, Aura! It could not be your brother that I saw."

"Not my brother!" echoed Miss Trevanion, with a look of pale dismay, "Oh who then?"

"Ah! who then indeed?" repeated Eveleen, bending down her watery eyes.

Digitized by Google

"But what matters it, since it was not your brother? It is but a rare outside that is printed on my memory, so I shall speedily forget it."

Miss Hungerford's tones and looks contradicted her words. In truth, her young heart was overcharged with disappointment, of a very different nature from that her friend imagined. She had cheated herself into believing, that the spell of fancy would be dissolved the moment she should be convinced that her fugitive was not the interesting Mr. Trevanion; and now she felt the cheat. A sad presentiment, that she should never see or hear of him more, weighed down every other feeling.

Miss Trevanion, all aghast, was some time before she could comment in words upon what she supposed was passing in her friend's mind; and when she did recover the power of speech, her consolations were aimed amiss; for she knew not that the latter wished not to find the face of her preserver, on the canvass that depicted a man given to another.

Eveleen had found a seat upon some piled folios, where Aura Trevanion sat down also, and fondly taking her hand,

Digitized by Google

alternately complained of her agitated silence, and ventured to interpret it. Her breathless questionings, finally brought Eveleen into making a full confession of the obstinate interest she took in the fate of one she never might see again.

In moments of sudden emotion we rarely say all we wish, or withhold all we might wish withheld: thus Eveleen Hungerford, surprised and disordered far more than she had anticipated, unwittingly informed Miss Trevanion of the strange hold the brave unknown had taken upon her affections; striving to justify her folly, as she termed it, by reminding her friend that it was the character of her brother she had coupled with his image. This confession was easily wrested to the fond sister's purposes: Miss Trevanion pressed on her, the force of character, compared with that of exterior;—nay, challenged for that of Arundell an equal degree of admiration with that deserved by the stranger. Eveleen sat still and silent, incapable of assenting to or denying the challenge; for all she remembered of the picture she had been regarding so intently, amounted to the conviction that it was not the countenance which even

Digitized by Google

now seemed kindling and speaking before her in countless varieties of expression. The real shame of her heart crimsoned all of her person which her dress left visible, and struggling with herself ere she could gather courage for the acknowledgment of such weakness, she exclaimed, —

"To think that I should care so much for a brave brow and a gallant mien! — Now my dream is over about your brother, I may say it had a wicked charm for me." Miss Trevanion would have hurried out some words of passionate pleading in favour of her own wishes, but Eveleen laid her hand upon her lips. "No more songs, cunning syren, if so please you; mine uncle Lake would show me the finger of Providence in this. I am humbled; — for I have been worshipping an idol made out of two images; it has fallen asunder, — and I must follow no more strange gods."

"You do not mean to give your hand to Lord Woodvill!" exclaimed Miss Trevanion in a tone of impatient disappointment, quickly following the track of her friend's thoughts. The latter smiled, as if to beguile attention from her flooded eyes, softly answering, —

Digitized by Google

"Not till I can give him my heart. Let me, however, look again on your brother's picture."

Miss Trevanion eagerly started up as her friend did, and drew towards the portrait, anxiously asking what she now thought of it?

"*Now*, I see that it is like Lord Villiers," was the calmer reply. At that instant a door behind them slowly opened, and the figure of Mr. Becket presented itself.

The quiet scrutiny of his first look, and his evident surprise when he saw whose privacy he was disturbing, seemed to say that he was not there an intentional spy, and Eveleen therefore returned his obeisance by a curtesy only slightly tremulous; but Miss Trevanion, all in disorder and alarm, burst into a hasty transport of anger; rashly accused him of eaves-dropping for his own or Colonel Trevanion's purposes; proudly daring him to repeat worse of her than that she had shed a few tears over a picture he had had good share in removing. When he attempted to speak in his own defence, she stopped him by the assurance that she would herself confess the venial

Digitized by Google

offence to her father, and commanded him from her presence.

Mr. Becket quietly lifted up his hands and eyes, with a deprecating motion, and retired. As Eveleen looked after him, and then turned to contemplate the quivering lips and convulsive movements of her agitated friend, she sighed bitterly at the inadequacy of the latter's powers to the hard claims of her destiny: that irritable sensibility unfitted its possessor for conducting any great matter safely to an end; and in the present instance, Miss Trevanion's rash defiance might either excite dangerous resentment in an injured man, or stimulate a real enemy to some preventive act of malice. She was now standing, conscience-struck, weeping at the mischief she had done; yet neither her pride nor prudence, perhaps, allowed of her following the secretary with an apology. The wild impulse had been yielded to; and the only step to take afterwards, was that of telling Sir Fulk Trevanion where they had been, and, if pressed hard, what they had seen. No one could imagine that such a slight matter would be severely treated, provided it were honestly confessed by the offender, before malice had retailed the story.

Digitized by Google

Miss Hungerford, knowing the thing past recall, endeavoured to allay the compunctious pangs of her poor friend, not by countenancing her ebullition of temper, but by bringing forward reasons for hoping it would not produce any evil consequence. From the few words she had heard Mr. Becket say, and the implements of writing he had with him, it was evident that he came to make some memorandums of deeds and leases contained in a chest in the further chamber, and coming with no bad intent, need not be suspected of malignant resentment now. She advised, however, their quick return below, and her own departure ere long. Miss Trevanion was willing enough to go; and hurrying out of the suit of waste rooms, they descended the steep stairs, and thredded tortuous passages before they regained that quarter of the old mansion whence they had stolen. There, after short rest given to poor Aura's breathlessness and tremor, they exchanged tender adieus.

With sinister forebodings on the part of the repentant Miss Trevanion, and no small degree of apprehension on that of Eveleen, they separated: Miss Hungerford to hurry

Digitized by Google

through the dusk by leaf-strewn paths, under leafless trees, where shrill winds whistled and withered grasses moaned, back to illuminated Rohesia: Aura, to take her station in the recess of her solemnly-tinctured window, watching her friend out of sight, and hearkening to the lofty anthems of the wind in the tops of the high trees; then falling into sad and serious thoughts of her own infirmity, until the moon arose, and the trampling hoofs of horses warned her of her father's return.

She was greeted at supper by a kinder salutation from her father than was generally compatible with his stateliness. She glanced at Mr. Becket, who was seating himself opposite to her, with his usually submissive bow. There was nothing hostile in his looks: but Dunbar, she thought, eyed her; as he did, indeed, narrowly: and the impression renewed itself in her, that these two persons were in secret league, and perhaps had already communicated about the recent scene.

Accidental circumstances, whilst he was absent, had given a tone of cheerfulness to the knight's conversation, which his daughter was loth to interrupt; yet she was eager

Digitized by Google

to begin foiling her enemy, whether he meditated an open attack or a concealed mine; and, the meal finished, she prayed her father, in a fluttered voice, to forgive her if she had been presumptuous in construing his silence to her parting request: she had shown her friend Eveleen the rare pieces of antiquity in the house that afternoon, a gratification Miss Hungerford had passionately desired.

"If that be all your offence, gentle cousin," Dunbar hastened to say, habitually directing his uncle's attention to every suspicious trifle, "methinks that sweet lip need not quiver with such piteous pleading."

"Foolish wench!" Sir Fulk peevishly exclaimed, filling his glass with wine, "how come you by this trick of growing white at every bauble? It offends me,—one would conceit me a gaoler instead of a father."

Miss Trevanion murmured a few words of thanks, almost too fervent for such a seemingly slight occasion, and Dunbar became certain there was something to discover; he would not let the matter end thus, but resumed:

Digitized by Google

"And what ancient relic took Miss Hungerford's fancy most? or, what picture? If a portrait, doubtless it must have been that of Perkin Warbeck's ally, Basil Trevanion, that being flattered with having a resemblance to your graceless kinsman now speaking. Is not that a fair guess, sir?" he added, affecting the tone of well-curbed levity, which always pleased and propitiated his uncle: then turning again to Aura, "Or was it some modern head—one of the thrown-by, spurious Ely's?"

Miss Trevanion's suddenly flushed cheeks turned to deathly whiteness: the impulse with which Dunbar ejaculated an exclamation of concern, at having said something wrong, was most admirably counterfeited. Her father's eye lighted upon her.—"You went not to look upon one modern picture there, I hope?"

For once Mr. Becket interposed between the thunderbolt and its victim:—"I think, madam!" he said, submissively, "you were considering the head of his Grace of Buckingham, in the fragment of tapestry;—I surely heard the name of Villiers!"

"Villiers!" reiterated Sir Fulk, a new

Digitized by Google

fire kindling in his face, "comes that young gentlewoman hither, to discourse with my daughter of a profligate dicer like that?"

"Nay, honoured sir!" Colonel Trevanion hastened to say, "Master Becket spake of his grandfather — his scene with our first Charles; done in that arras, which the Cromwellites made shatter of."

The unlucky Mr. Becket, foiled in the only attempt he had ever made, to do away an evil impression of himself, bowed silent acquiescence to the implied challenge for his assent, made by Colonel Trevanion's eye, as it turned to fix itself upon the troubled aspect of the affrighted Aura; who, changing white and red with every breath, from the conviction that at all hazards she must end this question of Lord Villiers, bravely rallied, and said in a voice of tolerable steadiness, — "No, master Becket, it was not his Grace of Buckingham's likeness in the tapestry we were looking at, when you came by chance upon us, —it was a picture — (here her voice became tremulous, and her eye fell) — that I ought not, perhaps to have taken the covering from." The last words were almost

Digitized by Google

suffocated by the agitation with which they were spoken, and she stood looking down like a criminal awaiting his sentence.

"You may go, Becket!" pronounced with an indrawn breath by his patron, at once dismissed the secretary. Dunbar knew that forerunner of a domestic storm, as well as he; but his interest lay in heightening and directing it to certain heads; and he remained, first whispering encouragement to his cousin, then beseeching his uncle not to be wroth with their gentle Aura for a little impertinent curiosity in her town-bred friend.

"Silence, nephew!" interrupted Sir Fulk, his voice exalted with anger, "leave me to deal with this gentlewoman! — Impertinent curiosity indeed! I gather from such, madam, that your discourses with this court lady are not what my high-strained confidence in you, led me to think. Family matters are talked of, I warrant, between you, — the old condemned, — the young pitied! else why this looking upon a face blotted from your father's heart? I will have no more feeding of your discontents by rebellious acts like this."

"Oh, sir!" Miss Trevanion began, with

Digitized by Google

locked hands and lifted eyes, interrupting his violence. Dunbar again hastened to give his false aid; vehemently, yet humbly, interceding for his trembling cousin; and, as if to save her, at all costs, giving up Miss Hungerford without reserve, to the utmost fury of indignation.

"How knew you, mistress?" resumed Sir Fulk, hearing but not answering his nephew, "how knew you where that picture was? Went you to the dormitory for the purpose of seeking it? answer me that!" His daughter too surely guessed what would follow an avowal of the truth, yet not being able to utter a direct falsehood, she remained silent. Again her father pressed the question, and faintly exclaiming, "I cannot lie to you, honoured sir,—I did hope to find that picture there!" sunk down into the seat from which she had risen.

"Oh, my sweet cousin!" exclaimed Dunbar, "say—confess—only say it was to pleasure your thoughtless friend's curiousness! it must have been to pleasure her, that you risked this displeasing of——"

His uncle's stern voice once more broke in upon his acted vehemence. — "Was it

Digitized by Google

to satisfy this young lady's wishes that you presumed to lay bare what I had ordered to be covered, — for my life-time at least?"

Miss Trevanion falteringly confessed, that it was partly to please her friend.

"And what motive," the knight resumed, in a tone of sterner anger, "could that young lady have to justify her, in her own opinion and in yours, for urging a daughter to disobey her father?"

Miss Trevanion for a few instants did not answer; but the labouring of her heart, and quicker respiration, gave token that she was on the point of making some important confession. Colonel Trevanion's heart knocked hard within him: he felt suddenly dragged to a precipice, down which some unseen touch might hurl him; and with a confusion of images before him, menacing danger from various quarters, with marvelous presence of mind tried to clear himself from the rocks, by helping off his cousin.

"I guess Miss Hungerford's motive, sir," he cried; "the Lord Villiers is said to be somewhat like the original of that picture; and women's curiosity to see if the thing were so, appeareth likely enough

Digitized by Google

in the fair cousin of his lady. Dearest sir, make not so grave a matter, of young silliness! Let not this poor offence, occasion my sweet cousin the loss of her friend's society. I crave this as a boon to mine own self;—on my knee I presume to crave it."

"Foolish boy!" exclaimed the knight, "I am not about to slay my daughter, that you clamour thus in her behalf! If she can find consolation for bosom miseries, only in weak complaints to one of a family her father scorns, she is no true child of mine. Indian tortures, do but make me an Indian in endurance."

Having thus got before the image of his own proud obstinacy, which self-love ever represented under the form of nobleness, Sir Fulk Trevanion would have staid to gaze there, until the current of his mind, perhaps, were changed, had not his nephew whispered his cousin to slip away.

"You are bold, sir!" he cried.—"Stay, madam; answer me this question, that I may understand what is under these insidious meetings. What was that young gentlewoman's reason for desiring to see that portrait?"

Miss Trevanion, now driven to despera-

Digitized by Google

tion, made a last stand with the wild courage of a stag at bay.

"If you would condescend, honoured sir, to ask that question of herself, I will be sworn she will bravely and faithfully answer it." The inspiration of some sudden hope sparkled in her eye as she concluded. "Providence hath many ways of working for poor mortals," she added, replying to the astonished look of her cousin; "and belike this mischance, is of God's own ordering, to bring that about, which false tongues and falser hearts strive hard to prevent."

"I will question this young gentlewoman," resumed Sir Fulk, sharply. "I like not meddlers and mystifiers. When cometh she here again?"

"To-morrow afternoon," was the submissive reply.

"I shall make bold to order the damsel into my library," retorted the knight, "ere she goes to your chamber. See that there be no communication between you until then. I charge you on your life! — the person that takes letter, or message, or token, from you to her had best beware: my extreme wrath is no breath of air."

Digitized by Google

There was a storm-cloud upon Sir Fulk's brow as he spoke, which threatened even more than his words: his daughter trembled, and became paler than before, whilst inarticulately giving the promise he demanded.

"Begone, then!" he resumed; "I will vex myself no further now."

Miss Trevanion withdrew with a beating heart and unsteady step; her brief confidence was gone: but when Dunbar seized the moment of leading her to the door, for passionately beseeching her to intrust him with aught she might wish conveyed to her friend, she retained spirit enough, to wither him with a single glance.

Whilst she was accusing herself of fatal precipitancy, calculating the probable mischief likely to follow her last and first act of rashness, yet thankful that she had not uttered the tempting falsehood which would have hushed this storm, Dunbar was left upon the burning brands of an uncertain fear. It was impossible for him to guess what Miss Hungerford had to say. His cousin's words and manner warned him that it boded good to the exile and evil to him: he thanked her for the warning. "Forewarned, fore-armed!" he repeated to himself.

Digitized by Google

"Have I your gracious leave, honoured sir," he asked, smiling, on his return from the door to the table, over which his uncle moodily rested his eyes, — "to say what I suspect this grave matter will turn out?"

"You may speak, sir," returned the knight, his brow as yet unknit.

Colonel Trevanion resumed. "A mere play of two fair young puppets, worked, without their knowing it, by that cunning mountebank, Lady Rhoda Brandon. We know what a cauldron of preposterous fancies that seething brain is. Did I not always assert — what your noble nature, my uncle, could not believe — that yon old intriguante would try to raise up their fallen house, by building it into ours? If the fair Mistress Eveleen could be brought to fancy your heir, why, the thing ——"

"What heir! sir fool?" interrupted Sir Fulk. "Speak you of yourself?"

"Nay, in good faith," returned Dunbar humbly; "not me! — not me! My disgrace may be part of the intrigue. I have passed so many slights upon these great Hungerfords, both in town and country — ay, long before your gracious favour made his majesty note me graciously also — that

Digitized by Google

they owe me a sore grudge for it. I did not certainly, with all my wondrous second-sight, guess at such presumption in them, as their attempting to settle our family concerns, and make Sir Fulk Trevanion undo his own work."

"They reckon without their host, I can tell them," interrupted the knight, starting up from his seat with inflamed looks. He took a hasty stride across the room, then stopped suddenly. "I see what it is you think they are scheming; my son's recall — this girl's fancy of him — the king's allowance of the match, and pardon of all that has been — Idiots! — think they a father's just resentment is to be appeased by another's clemency?"

"Your pardon, sir!" Dunbar ventured to interrupt him with. "The young lady herself, I doubt not, is imposed on by the rumours afloat amongst my unhappy cousin's partisans here, that he took no personal share with Monmouth — and she has naturally imparted them to Aura, and so both are the easier played on by more cunning heads."

"Poor fools! — poor fools!" ejaculated Sir Fulk, with momentary sadness, then

Digitized by Google

recovering into energy: "And what would it matter to them, or to me, even were it so in fact? All — all might be repaired by his repentance of the past — except his marriage. The daughter of an adulteress! No wine, Dunbar! — no — no!" (and he put the brimming glass by, with a shaking hand.) "I will go to bed, and you shall bring me some of those Turkish drops of yours. I am chafed, more than sorts with myself, by this foolish business."

Colonel Trevanion seized so favourable an opening, to urge, with his nicest address, the policy and dignity of ending the thing at once, by merely breaking the acquaintance between his cousin and Miss Hungerford, without descending to enquire into her conduct! but this the knight sternly refused, protesting that he would not fail in a tittle of justice to one of Lord Carraton's race; and, taking his nephew's arm, retired, to receive from his hand that insiduous composing draught, which the latter well knew soothed for the time, but afterwards confused every mental faculty.

Little dreamt Eveleen Hungerford on the morrow, when she was pensively crossing the pebbled space of the vine court,

Digitized by Google

that she was not destined that day to ascend to her friend's apartment. It is true, she came not without some uneasy speculations as to the consequence of their visit to the waste rooms in Treverderet; but the discovery she had made there, was so important to herself, and privileged her in such free returns to thoughts otherwise criminal to indulge, that even her unselfish heart was now wrapt by them. Her gallant preserver not Arundell Trevanion, she might again, without guilt — alas! not without hazard — suffer herself to dream sweet dreams of possible improbabilities; yet by what name was she to think of him! where — how to fancy him! what was there in a look—a tone, that she thus found his, clinging to her memory! enforcing the belief that she should see him again? Would it not be wiser, better, to think of him but as we do of those golden gleams in sober skies, that shine awhile and go out for ever? Well! she would resolve against her weaknesses: but, ah! who resolves, assured of keeping their resolutions? A wringing sigh followed this inward ejaculation of conscious infirmity. Eveleen felt that her sigh ought to have been heaved for nearer

Digitized by Google

interests. That very day, Lady Rhoda Brandon had returned in a state of frightful irritation from disappointment: Lord Carraton was not courageous enough, either to follow or to reject the selfish policy she counselled; but continued varying between the wish to do the first, and the sense of iniquity in effecting it, which was likely to lose him the merit of doing either, spontaneously.

The misery of a divided family, the odium of opinion against them, and the pain of sincere sympathy with the poor girl Lady Rhoda's measures sought to arrest, did, indeed, weigh upon Eveleen's heart; so that, added to thought of him she never might know more of, distressful images alone occupied her, making her heedless of outward things. Sir Fulk Trevanion himself took her passive hand, and with formal courtesy prayed the honour of an audience from her.

To tell her in a few words what was his object, whilst leading her up the two courts, and between the mailed figures of the long hall, seemed the work of an instant. Miss Hungerford found herself all at once in his darkly-furnished library, where he gravely

Digitized by Google

bowed her into a seat, ere she recovered from her astonishment. Her's was a spirit not easily daunted; for it was one, ever conscious of honest purposes: her open expression of amazement was more in her favour than the pale perturbation of poor Aura's looks, who, aware that she had plucked the present evil upon her own head, looked for utter ruin as punishment, and stood there motionless as a statue. Colonel Trevanion was present also; standing somewhat aloof, as if in respectful gallantry, but in reality to observe, without being too closely observed himself.

Sir Fulk prefaced the question he said he was about to put, by apologizing to Miss Hungerford for the indecorum he was guilty of, in thus forcibly obtaining an audience from her. He then gravely recapitulated what had passed at Treverderet on the preceding evening; hinting at the ungracious return which appeared to have been made by his daughter and her guest, for his implicit confidence in the discretion of the one, and the delicacy of the other; professing himself at a loss to imagine what motive could urge a young lady of high breeding and right feeling, to intermeddle with matters usually considered sacred from

Digitized by Google

strangers, and by such strange curiosity as he complained of, rather supplying food to the unworthy regrets of her distempered friend, than using a kindly influence to destroy them. He begged, however, that Miss Hungerford would accept his thanks for all the good she had done, or truly wished to effect in his daughter's health and spirits; and to believe that it cost him infinite pain, both to see the blush which his unavoidable expression of disapprobation had called to her cheek, and to decline for the future her visits at Treverderet.

The brightest and loveliest blush did, indeed, damask the face of Eveleen, for it was the glow of self-respect; but Colonel Trevanion, with ready apprehension of its true import, affecting to believe it a token of mingled fear and shame, exclaimed, — "As I am a man, I cannot bear to witness such distress! Pardon me, honoured sir! have I your gracious leave to lead this lady out?" And as he spoke he would have taken Eveleen's hand, with well-acted concern for her supposed discomfiture, and hurried her from the room; but drawing back, and steadily regarding him, she said, in a firm voice, — "Not so, sir! it is the

Digitized by Google

trick of my nature to colour over much, at speech from one of your sex. I wish not to quit this presence: and I have that to say, which, with God's leave, I had purposed to say one day to the honoured knight before us: now I must speak out at all hazards, ere what I hoped is ripe; or live chargeable with the foul title of a mere busy-body. — Sir Fulk Trevanion," she added, with modest firmness, "will you grant me a patient hearing? my story will answer your question."

An expression of embarrassment and uncertainty in the countenance of the knight was replied to by a look of passionate affectionateness from his nephew, whose whole host of fears, and arts to end those fears, were put in motion by the young lady's manner.

"Madam!" exclaimed the hypocrite, "whatever you say, I pray you touch not upon a subject which shakes every true Trevanion's heart. Certain names are forbidden here."

"I am not now to learn the character of Sir Fulk Trevanion, sir," replied Eveleen, steadily; "he has the reputation of being just; and having accused me of cu-

Digitized by Google

rious intermeddling with his family concerns, owes me the justice of letting me go upon my defence."

"Speak, madam," Sir Fulk said, with momentary respect; then spurring himself on to a tone of haughty irony, "So fair an ambassador, whether for war or alliance, may command courtesy." The emphasis with which he pronounced the word alliance, again suffused Eveleen's cheek with blushes; and again the eager Dunbar was on the point of speaking; but noting his uncle's observation of that blush, he thought it better to keep silent, and see what he had to grapple with, than fight his foe in the dark, and so be taken at advantage. With compressed lips, and a restrained breath, therefore, he drew back towards his cousin, who stood, with locked hands, intently gazing upon her father and her friend, waiting, in mute anxiety, for the result of the desperate step into which the latter was forced.

Calmly disregarding the contemptuous hint of Sir Fulk Trevanion after its first effect was over, Miss Hungerford briefly detailed the circumstances of her two rencontres with the disguised fugitives, from

Digitized by Google

whom she had received such direct testimony to the fact of Mr. Trevanion's absence from the enterprise of Monmouth.

"A youth, you say, madam!" interrupted Colonel Trevanion; then glancing at his uncle, "too likely indeed!"

Sir Fulk made no reply, for he was puzzled by Miss Hungerford's foregone appeal to his justice; but all his features quivered. — Eveleen had previously acknowledged her imagination of the elder stranger's identity with him she called the exile, and she now stated, that as it was needful for her to ascertain whether her fancy were right, that was the main reason why she desired to see the banished portrait.

"I have been taught," she concluded modestly, "to think it my duty to help the unfortunate, and right the injured, to the extent of my poor ability. Providence, by casting me in the way of the adventures I speak of, gave me, I fancied, the commission of carrying comfort, eventually, where all Cornwall knoweth, without prying, there must have been much honourable sorrow. Surely I did but justice to Sir Fulk Trevanion's noble heart, when I

Digitized by Google

believed that no one could do him a greater kindness, than to bring him any tidings which might cause him to doubt of his son's guiltiness?"

She pleaded guilty to the charge of infusing her own hopes into the bosom of her friend; but persuasively asked, if she were unpardonable for doing that, without which the heart-broken sister was not to be revived? She added, that having taken steps to ascertain the truth of the fugitive youth's testimony, she was only waiting the result of them ere she should humbly have reported the matter to Sir Fulk Trevanion himself, when her over-earnest desire to see whether the companion of that youth, were the person she suspected, brought her under the knight's displeasure.

The knight, who had stood all this time leaning over the back of his daughter's chair, shaking it alternately by the force and feebleness of his grasp, now raised his dark eye, shorn of its wonted proud beam, yet black and portentous with the brooding thunder, and would have spoken, but the convulsive quiver of his lip forbade the effort.

"You know not what festering sores you are handling in our hearts, madam,"

Digitized by Google

Dunbar exclaimed, with marvellous presence of mind, "when you recall the memory of that accursed bane of all our honours — that boy companion! — I pray you cease." As his nephew spoke, Sir Fulk Trevanion pressed his hand strongly against his brow, and with some suffocated exclamations abruptly retreated to the farther end of the large apartment, and threw open a window, as if greedy of air. Dunbar hastened, apparently in affectionate distress, to his side. Eveleen and her friend were well aware, that although they were thus left in a manner to themselves, an enemy's keen eye would be upon them; and rightly prepared to avoid all suspicion of anxiety to arrange questions and answers with each other, kept widely apart still, though with meeting eyes that severally expressed anguish and resolute hope, as their separate natures and different situations prompted. Whilst Sir Fulk and his kinsman remained at a distance, the friends stood in almost pulseless stillness, awaiting the conclusion of their low conversation.

In the gloom of that part of the library to which the uncle and nephew had retired, occasioned by the shadowing of tall

Digitized by Google

book-cases and heavy window-draperies, little more could be discerned of the persons there, except the outlines and the gestures of their figures. From the latter it was evident, that Dunbar spoke alternately with vehemence and persuasiveness; and that Sir Fulk, after violent emotion at first, gradually settled into some fixed purpose. He came suddenly forward, and approaching Miss Hungerford, said, with a wholly altered manner, for it was cold and centered: —

"I thank you, madam, for the extraordinary interest you take in my family's honour and happiness; but you must give me leave to doubt the sense and prudence which lets you believe in the testimony of outlawed men, and prompts you to inform against yourself, as their abettor in escape."

"No want of prudence, sir, assuredly," Eveleen said, with a mantling cheek and sparkling eye, "when I am committing myself to a noble enemy of the Hungerfords!"

The knight of Treverderet felt the generous compliment thrill through him, and he had difficulty in recovering from its gratifying impression. He did so, how-

Digitized by Google

ever, after a very low bow of his head, and a long after-pause.

"I am an old man, fair gentlewoman!" he resumed; "therefore, no longer abide the self-deceptions which are so agreeable to one of your age. Unhappily I am too well assured of the facts, that have seared me against all delusions: I will no longer question your credulousness, nor seek too narrowly into your motives; so let them pass. But a stranger is neither qualified, nor, may I say it, justified, in intermeddling with the private feelings of a whole family, from the weak confidences given to him or her by one member of it. I therefore crave your pardon, madam, when I repeat, that it sorts not with my humour to have the peace of my household disturbed by officious kindness. Since my daughter cannot solace herself in your company, without unworthily discoursing of that which she knows her father desireth never to have spoken of, I must forbid her the indulgence somewhat too rashly granted, and crave permission to say, that I may not brook the slightest attempt at renewing such acquaintance, either by letter, speech, or message, even from Miss Hungerford."

Digitized by Google

As he ended with a severe frown, and extended his hand to lead her to the door, Eveleen recoiled, but not in an offensive or resentful manner; whilst poor Miss Trevanion distractedly threw herself forward, beseeching her father not to take from her the great solace of her sad life; offering to pledge herself that no more mention of her brother should be made between them.

"Stay these rash promises, my dear Aura!" interrupted her friend, with gentle energy, — "or promise for yourself alone. I may neither keep silent, nor remain idle, now, on the subject of your brother's clearance. Mine honour is concerned in it, as well as your happiness, and that of the noble knight himself. Heaven has called me to the task of dispersing falsehoods, and unmasking a real traitor, (here her diamond eye was levelled with a sword's sharpness upon Colonel Trevanion.) I have other testimonies, gathered and gathering, with which to confound those who have contrived to get even the keepers of his majesty's conscience, into their plot. It would sort well, methinks, with the honourable blood of Colonel Trevanion, as he will benefit most by his absent cousin's ruin, were he to

Digitized by Google

show himself more ready to welcome aught that promises a clearance of that injured gentleman."

The blood, which had actually forsaken Dunbar Trevanion's face at this allusion to his secret bond with Father Peters, rushed back to it with an appearance of honest indignation.—"I guessed the aim was at me!" he exclaimed.

"Are you the instigator of this foul insinuation against your cousin?" sternly interrogated Sir Fulk, turning upon his daughter. Ere she could answer, Dunbar hastened to disclaim any charge against her; beseeching his uncle not to heed the precipitate expression which Miss Hungerford's scornful censure had forced from him: he then entreated that young lady's pardon for his giving too wounding a meaning to her words, adding, with dissembled sadness, "I confess myself painfully,—I suppose suspiciously placed. My honoured uncle's favour makes me a mark for envy and hard judgments: I am, moreover, a soldier of his majesty's, madam, and dare not dispute the justice of my sovereign's actions. Bring me,—nay, rather, I should say, carry to the king,—sufficient proof of

Digitized by Google

that absent one's unstained loyalty, and I take Heaven to witness —"

"Oh, do not! do not!" interrupted Miss Trevanion, horror-struck at the impious appeal she believed him about to make: she met her friend's warning eye at the instant, and her wild one dropped; but not before its glance had pierced to the centre of her base cousin, making him quake lest more than a look were about to confound him.

"Part — part, ladies!" said Sir Fulk, his voice hoarsened by the wrath which his high-breeding with difficulty controlled. His threatening brow menaced aught like violent emotion in either; so that poor Aura, aware of her own inability to rein in impetuous feelings, murmured some inarticulate word, waved her death-cold hand, and without venturing to look at her friend, tried to get away. But ere she reached the door, her small degree of strength failed, and she would have sunk down, had not Eveleen hastened to prevent it, and as she sustained her on her throbbing bosom, bent over and kissed her forehead with tenderest compassion. — "Bear up, sweetest Aura!" she murmured; "trust in Him

Digitized by Google

who is above all! and, rely upon it, we shall meet again to bless Him even for this bitter hour." The fervour of sacred confidence with which she now kissed the lips of her friend, gave some of its own warmth to the desolated Aura; but choking with her greater grief (for she would be left to await providences, and Eveleen might go forth to meet them), she in vain attempted to return the affectionate adjuration, by words.

"I go," Miss Hungerford said aloud, whilst the weeping girl still hung on her, "content to abide Sir Fulk Trevanion's evil thoughts awhile; because I have inward assurance, that ere long he will find I have only been the first to tell him a happy fact. Some doubt of the wisdom and justice of taking an irrevocable step, before he has made himself quite sure of its justice, must, I think, be gotten into his honourable thoughts. Let him but take the trouble to collect the proofs of an outlawed man's guilt, and I'll stake my life he finds none."

"Employ me, sir, on this errand!" Dunbar impetuously cried. "I beseech you let *me* seek, for what, if to be found, would make me the happiest of men. I see

Digitized by Google

that my place in your dear affections is displeasing; but that, my enemies shall never get willingly from me — all else, they are welcome to."

"Oh, serpent!" burst from the unguarded lips of Miss Trevanion, as she raised her head from the neck of her friend, her whole countenance in a blaze.

Sir Fulk looked with kindling fury away from the artfully-moistened eyes of his nephew, to her sparkling ones. "What means this presumption! Am I a lunatic or idiot, that both my children and strangers presume to erect themselves into judges and dictators! Is my house never to be rid of jealousies and plots? First, it is the poor worm my secretary; next, it is my warm-hearted, blundering kinsman yonder! Away with this — I'll have no more of it! Pardon me, young gentlewoman," he added, replying to Eveleen's look of staid rebuke, "you have helped to raise this storm, and you must abide it, as well as my daughter."

Miss Hungerford, answering merely by a bend of the head, once more wound her arms about the waist of her friend; and sealing her lips again upon hers, in thought only, took farewell, and commended her to

Digitized by Google

Heaven. The wretched Aura was scarcely sensible to the pressure: nothing save the consciousness of her misery was left within her. Such a parting as this, was little inferior to the agony with which the victim of a pitiless superstition sees herself about to be built up, yet alive, in her future tomb; and as the stern accents of the knight commanded her out of his presence, she lost sense altogether, remaining unknowingly in the arms of her hated cousin, who flew to render his support, as his uncle led Miss Hungerford from the room. Sir Fulk Trevanion spoke not a word during the time employed in leading his fair companion, by the way she had come, to the outer door of the hall, — there, in the presence of assembled servants, the usual ceremonials of polite leave-taking were scrupulously exchanged between them; after which, Eveleen Hungerford re-trod, for the last time, her way back to Rohesia.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. V.

Miss Hungerford went bravely on, so long as she might fancy herself within possible sight by the proud personage she was leaving behind. She did not even note those sympathies of nature which so often soothe or aggravate the grief of a sad heart.

In the evergreen garden, the cypresses, with their pale green berries hanging like tears upon the cheeks of mourners, might have attracted her attention, or the low shiver of the woods awakened ideas of struggling sighs; but her sorrow was beyond the reach of imagination's gentler visions, and she proceeded swiftly along, absorbed in gathering griefs.

As she ascended a high path, she stopped and looked back at the ivy-wrapt house, the darkening gardens, the dim parks, losing their distinctness in a rising fog. From this spot she could just see the top of the Lady's Chapel, breaking through the trees overhanging the river; but the river itself, from the steepness of its Treverderet bank,

Digitized by Google

was hidden from her straining eyes, and its murmur only came to her ear. How sad is the phrase "for the last time!" As Eveleen pronounced it, she yielded to a passion of bitter tears, thinking it might, indeed, be the last time she should see her broken-hearted friend. If that drooping spirit's fond hope were destined for disappointment, to one of her frail health how fatal might be the consequence! Eveleen paused. — Was it possible that she herself had been deceived! — What! that gallant unknown, a deceiver! Her soul recoiled from such a thought. Yet, he might have been duped by his young companion. Dunbar Trevanion's artful insinuations had inspired doubts and fears, of which Eveleen was till now incapable; and she mused long upon his exclamation about the youth. But then her stranger was not Arundell Trevanion; and the boy with him, by voice, limb, and language, proved himself, indeed, of the hardier sex. Yet even so, clouds might gather over every prospect. Philips might fall into some new mischief, and his testimony perish with him; or some great evil might already have befallen the gallant unknown; or his ungoverned com-

Digitized by Google

panion might have broken from him and forfeited his life to his rash contempt of danger. She strove to rally her spirits by recollecting, that she had still in her memory all which these separate persons had told; and all the important communications given her by Aura Trevanion herself; and that having Lord Woodvill abroad, and her uncle Lake at home, to confide in, and employ for her friend's service, she might eventually succeed in establishing the facts so much desired. Still, however, Dunbar Trevanion's plausible suspicion recurred, leaving a cloud over hopes which would not pass away. Yet was there one glow within her, — the certainty that now her zeal in the cause of an injured man, and an afflicted friend, was winnowed from every particle of self-seeking.

The early dinner hour of a century and a half ago left the major part of the day to follow; so that Miss Hungerford, having quitted Rohesia soon after that meal was over, had some time left, ere it was necessary to join her relations for the evening.

She went, then, first to her own sitting room, where she endeavoured to compose herself, by dwelling upon the seed of com-

Digitized by Google

fort which her own promises must have left in her friend's mind, for future growth there — the promise of slackening not in her exertions to see justice done to Mr. Trevanion. This idea did, indeed, tranquillize her so far, as enabled her to repair to her cousin's sitting room, where it was Lady Rhoda's custom to drink coffee of evenings, when without visitors.

Eveleen was not sorry to find only Lady Villiers there, caressing her boy before he was taken away to bed. At sight of his most frequent playfellow, the pretty creature stretched out its little arms, and with a cooing sound wooed her sweet lip to his. The invitation was not resisted; Eveleen took him delightedly in her arms, whilst his mother complained of her long absence; lamenting the gloom which black gowns and none but home-faces threw around her; and confessing to most uncomfortable sensations.

In return for her cousin's instant proposal of sending for Lady Rhoda, Lady Villiers exclaimed, "She will poison me with potions! besides, Villiers is here; and is only just gone to her, on matters of his own."

Digitized by Google

In a low voice Eveleen enquired in what humour he was come?

Oh, black! black!" returned the easy wife, motioning the child's nurse out of the room. — "You remember my mother was sure his humour of a sober life would never last? he has lost at play again."

"Alas! alas!" ejaculated her cousin; "I had flattered myself Lord Villiers would not so soon have broken from his good resolutions. I would you had not been dissuaded from obliging him; or that you had tried the experiment of going with him abroad."

"What! would you have had me bury him and myself out of the world!" echoed Lady Villiers, with unusual vivacity of feeling, "or gone to the dull court — household I should call it—of the stadtholder! My sweetest cousin, you are dreaming. — Give up my place now, and the one I am sure to get very soon! Don't you know that the queen is to stand for this babe that's coming? and, I have been privately warned, means to give me a diamond stomacher the day of the christening."

"Oh, dear Diana!" ejaculated Eveleen, tears moistening her pleading eyes, "can

Digitized by Google

you balance such worthless gauds, against your husband's best interests?"

"Worthless! you call them," repeated Lady Villiers, with the most amiable yet ruinous good humour; "how folk differ! —now my passion, is for diamonds. I think I did not fall in love with Villiers, till I saw his handsome leg girded with that garter of brilliants his uncle gave him. Anne of Austria paid marvellously for a few flatteries, when she bestowed such a costly thing as that. Since you care so little for such baubles, sweet coz, you had best give me this case;" and the laughing Diana held up one which contained jewels of great value, belonging to Eveleen, who, to gratify her cousin's childish whim of employment, had left her to brighten and fancy a new setting for.

"In sooth, I care not overmuch for them," returned Eveleen, smiling with her wonted expression of enchanting frankness; "that is, I like them not better than better things; yet I do like them, with woman's silly pleasure in all that sparkles."

"Ah, my pretty cousin," exclaimed Lady Villiers, "but why do you say I do nought for my lord's interests? Am I not anxious

Digitized by Google

to gain her majesty's favour, and will not that do him service?"

"It will most likely place you and him more entirely where his greatest temptation will be surest to find him," replied Eveleen, with a soft concern in her looks and voice.

Lady Villiers mused a moment, then with something like an effort at seriousness, "Every one of us must have some faults; poor George's are only his headstrong temper, and this provoking trick of play; but that, you know, hurts only himself, for he almost always loses. It does seem strange that play should be thought so wicked. What harm can there be in taking up and laying down a few bits of painted paper, or in jingling dice?"

"The consequences, the consequences, my too-indulgent cousin!" returned Eveleen, with deep seriousness; "is there no sin, think you, in beggaring such a helpless innocent as this? Oh, Diana, there are some noble materials yet left in your husband's character, if you would but try to build ——" She was interrupted by a muttered exclamation, between derision and anguish in its sound, and looking round

Digitized by Google

towards the door, saw Lord Villiers himself on the threshhold.

He advanced with a slight notice of his hat, threw himself upon a seat, then starting up again at the sight of his boy in Eveleen's arms, ordered him out of the room.

"Why, what meaneth this fancy?" asked his lady, smiling at her husband's angry summons of the nurse.

"It is my humour," was his answer, throwing himself his length upon the sofa.

Miss Hungerford's attempt of carrying the child out, ere the attendant could come for him, was deprecated by signs from Lady Villiers; and she remained therefore. She perceived, that the wretched, self-accused Villiers was in one of his worst moods — moods in which the kisses of his sweet babe were daggers to him: she doubted not but he was smarting, too, under the lash of Lady Rhoda's reproaches, which were never dealt mercifully; and wondered not that such a nature as his, was roused by it into absolute frenzy.

"And how have you sped with my mother?" Lady Villiers asked unwisely, merely to say something; for she saw he had been disappointed.

Digitized by Google

"Guess!" returned her lord, in a tone of the bitterest scorn; and raising himself on his elbow as he spoke, gave both his companions a full view of his face — its powerful expression rendered that slight word fearful. Eveleen felt herself turn pale. "Then she will not unlock her mysterious cabinet?" the skill-less wife resumed.

"You shall unriddle the first rebus made by his majesty's fool!" exclaimed her husband, all at once taking up his most *frightful* air of levity.—"Fair Eveleen, those noble materials you spake of just now, will never be reared into aught habitable. Every first stone I lay, is kicked down by a family foot. So, as there seemeth no profit by *good*, a man may as well take the pleasure of *bad*."

"How does this apply to your case, at present, dear cousin?" Eveleen timidly enquired.

"You know," he resumed, "that there is a question amongst our honourable house, about bastardizing a certain child yet to be born. I was tried on the subject; and because my wife's lady-mother, could not get me to say, I believed Hungerford was

Digitized by Google

mad when he married the poor wench he had cheated out of herself, I am told that I may look to the next Lord Carraton for the help I came hither to ask from my boy's grand dame."

Had Eveleen been a catholic, she would have crossed herself at this dreadful proof of her aunt's vindictiveness; as it was, she stood some time speechless, then said, "And is your situation unusually ——"

Villiers interrupted her with instant return to that levity which had just before chilled her blood.—"Nay, only the old jest. I have been cozened at cards, by one whom it is no boy's play to be debtor to,—one that will sooner carry his honourable ledger of my losses to him, to mine uncle Buckingham, than brook delay of payment. Now this immaculate uncle of mine — calling not to mind how many times he hath taught me, on his knee, to shuffle cards and throw dice, joying to see his royal master lose golden stakes, to flesh my young appetite — mine uncle, I say ——"

"Will not be extreme then to your offence, great as it seemeth to such a one as me!" Eveleen interrupted him with.

"How well you know the world!" con-

Digitized by Google

temptuously exclaimed Lord Villiers: "I have lived long enough to find out that the losing gamester is always branded. So long as I played and won, or lost but evenly with others, my virtuous kindred saw no sinfulness in the pastime: but, lo you now the difference! — after certain companions of mine, who had started men of honour, played till they were driven to study and practise the arts that ruined themselves — upon me ——"

"O cousin, cousin!" ejaculated Eveleen, moved beyond management of her great emotion, "see to what this *harmless* diversion, may lead at last!"

"It shall never lead me there!" was Lord Villiers's reply, uttered with an emphasis of look and tone, which almost added "I will die rather."

Eveleen's heart was momentarily suspended. His bitter irony before, the acute feeling of wrong and inconsistency which it breathed, showed how well the ill-educated Villiers was qualified by nature to discern the want of a principle in another's conduct. Such contempt of those connected with him, aggravated by that self-disgust which exasperates a proud nature to

Digitized by Google

madness, might hurry him who felt them to some act of reckless desperation; and Eveleen thought of what that might be, with a start of agony.

Lady Villiers, quite unconscious of what she feared, merely prayed to know why her lord should suppose his uncle, who had formerly got him out of similar scrapes, should be implacable now?

"Because," answered her husband moodily, "if I do not redeem a pledge that I have given, the scoundrel in whose hands it is lodged, will let him see that I have forfeited my word of honour — a word renewed to his mightiness, upon every fresh kindness he did me. I was besotted, not to have given my body instead!"

"Well!" exclaimed the unsuspecting wife, "I really never desired his great estates much; for I should hate living in Yorkshire; so I care not where he bestoweth them."

"And you care not how it fareth with your husband's honour," Lord Villiers bitterly enquired; "nor yet what is to become of the wretched creatures we give life to! Do you ever think, as I do, of certain lands and tenements that have made wings

Digitized by Google

to themselves and fled away? Better — better to end it!" he said inwardly, starting up with a distempered air.

"Where go you, Lord Villiers!" exclaimed Eveleen, interposing between him and the door, trembling as she did so. "You fright me strangely, — you will terrify my cousin, — she has not been well of late, — pray stay here, — you are not yourself!"

"Myself — my very self!" repeated Villiers with an imbittered smile, yet reseating himself, and looking wistfully at his wife.—"You have not been well, Di!" he questioned in a softened tone, "then I'll be less ruffianly. Your mother made me thus savage. I cannot, — will not go to her again. Yet —" he stopped abruptly, looked upon the ground some minutes in stern thought, then raising his powerful eyes, added, "Di! if you love me, go to her; try her once more, — for me, — for Charles. By my soul, not even for him would I brook her insults again!"

Lady Villiers more than demurred; pleading her state, and the nervous horror she had of her mother's shrill voice when speaking angrily.

Digitized by Google

"Cannot I go?" Eveleen eagerly interrogated. Lady Villiers caught at the welcome offer; her lord hesitated: but Eveleen pressed her services upon him so heartily, that he consented to give her the commission, stating the extent of pecuniary assistance required from his mother-in-law.

"And now it is fitting you should know," he added, "what it is I have but one week to redeem; and glad would the winner be if I did not redeem it. You remember a certain garter, with the motto in diamonds, which Anne of Austria gave to the first Duke of Buckingham, when he was young and gallant. Mine uncle, his son, was as vain of the reputation that hung by that gift, as though it anointed himself with the whispered fame of his father; and by the time his leg ceased to become it, bestowed it upon a certain wretched stripling you wot of, that its history might be enquired of, as in days past. That boy was often tempted afterwards to turn its glittering stones into purses; but he had taken the costly thing, as a trust for those that were to follow: he had given his word that he would never mutilate or part with it, — and now he has pledged it!" Vil-

Digitized by Google

liers paused—then added, "Another week, and the garter is either broken up and sent piece-meal abroad, or taken, for richer redemption, to my uncle."

"Oh, do beg hard then, Eveleen!" exclaimed Lady Villiers, with something like anxiety; "it will make George easy. Tell my mother, if she will but help him this time, he will promise never to play again."

"No! — no promise!" interrupted Lord Villiers vehemently. "I will never bring myself to shame like this, again. How your eye speaks, Eveleen!" he continued, as she did indeed look at him with kindling hope that such self-doubt was the forerunner of a strength he knew not of. "Waste not preachments upon me now; the die of my character was stamped long — long ago, before I was consulted on it, and by artificers that might have made better work of it; — but let that pass. Go, and do me the last act of the kind, I shall ever ask of any one."

There was something sinister in the tone of Villiers as he spoke, giving such a doubtfulness to his long-drawn sigh, that Eveleen lingered a moment ere she reco-

Digitized by Google

vered from the fear that once more crossed her. He smiled, however, and willing to be cheated out of a horrid thought, she staid no longer.

With equal gentleness and delicacy Miss Hungerford executed her commission. To repeat the arguments on both sides, for and against another exertion to save Lord Villiers, would be useless. One disputant was a hard, severe judging woman, habituated to punish to the utmost any fault committed against the dignity and power of her family; the other, a creature all compassion and humbleness, less willing to chastise offences than anxious to see the offender delivered from the tyranny of his passions. As Lady Rhoda's wrath at her son-in-law, was not so much for his wild dissipation of character and fortune, as for his contempt of place, and opposition to her present plans, she was deaf to all the pleadings of Eveleen.

"He should smart for his presumptuous defiance of her," she said, "for she would not lend him a single guinea."

Eveleen returned with sorrowful looks to give an account of her embassy. She was powerless; since being under age, there

Digitized by Google

was no help she could tender Villiers, which her guardians must not acquiesce in; and to gain Lord Carraton's consent, seemed hopeless. She determined, however, to try for it by letter on the morrow. Cheered a little by this private resolution, she returned to the boudoir of her cousin, where Lady Villiers, with silly kindness, was hoping to soothe her lord's black gloom, by playing over to him the airs her Spanish mistress had taught her upon the guitar. His jaundiced aspect, as he walked to and fro, proved that she touched not the harp of David. His abrupt question when Eveleen entered, produced what he sought, a decisive reply; but as Eveleen would have softened the shock, by hinting at what she purposed doing on the morrow, he motioned her to silence.

"No morrow! no morrow!" he exclaimed with frightful violence, for every passion within him was inflamed to a pitch of fierce desperation. "Lady Villiers, if you care aught for the thriftless wretch you are tied to, do something to rid him of the busy devil at his elbow."

What that demon prompted, Eveleen too surely guessed, and stood bewildered

Digitized by Google

with thought of what she ought to do. Lady Villiers uttered a childish cry, from the momentary belief that her lord did indeed see the fiend he spoke of. He resumed with a steadier voice, —

"Listen to me, Di: — I am going to cool this fevered head in the night air — for one hour, — two, perhaps. When I return, let me hear that *you* have tried your mother for me; she may not resist your pleadings for our boy: — and this you *may* say for your husband, that he does verily believe he has gotten his surfeit of play and its consequences for life, and is not without hope of abiding in heart-hatred of it. If you do not face her fierceness for me, I shall have the right measure of your affections; and then, demurring is over." As he pronounced the last words, in a tone that often afterwards rung in the dreaming ear of Eveleen, Lord Villiers rushed desperately from the room.

Had Lady Villiers been in a less precarious situation, her cousin would not have struggled as she now did, to restrain the agonized fear which almost burst her heart; but to say what she most feared, would have been too rash an experiment upon the

Digitized by Google

supposed apathy of a wife; and smothering its expression, she bounded herself to the urging of every other argument except that most powerful one, by way of counterpoise to Lady Villiers's indolent reluctance. The poor lady, indeed, was ill at ease in body, confessing she was more fit to go quietly to rest, than enter upon a scene with her mother. Go to her mother, however, she did, and whilst she was exerting unusual eloquence to persuade one obstinate against all entreaties, Eveleen hastily wrote a short letter to her uncle Lake, imploring him to manage with her guardians, either as gift or loan, the accommodation of Lord Villiers with the money he needed: — meaning to give this herself, open to Villiers on his return. Lady Rhoda Brandon sent her daughter away as unsuccessful as her niece had been; although the eyes of Lady Villiers showed that tears had not been spared to soften her. Eveleen's instant communication of her own intended kindness, quickly brightened the mood of her easy cousin, who was perfectly sure all would now go well, and waited impatiently for her lord's return to complete her comfort, and conclude the disagreeable busi-

Digitized by Google

ness. A billet, which she had written directly after quitting her mother, was in his page's possession, to give her lord upon his return, that its kind strain might soften his great disappointment ere he came up to her apartment; but unwilling to go to rest before he should reappear, lingered through another hour in her pretty saloon. But half-hour succeeded to half-hour, and no Lord Villiers.

"He could not have made sure Lady Rhoda would disappoint him, and gone back to London?" His wife answered the implied question, by saying that his page and horses were still at Rohesia; so he would be back, however late. Again they sat silent and expecting: Eveleen with a secret misgiving which blanched her cheek and chilled her blood; Lady Villiers occasionally complaining of indisposition, and expressing a fear that her expected time of suffering was at hand. The utmost she permitted her cousin to do upon this, was to send privately off to order the attendance of a medical person the next morning; meanwhile she consented to retire to her sleeping chamber, if Eveleen would kindly go there with her and sit up till Villiers

Digitized by Google

returned. This her cousin willingly consented to do; for having learned from the servant, to whom she gave instructions for the morning, that Lord Villiers's page had left Rohesia at a certain hour, beyond which his master told him not to wait, but follow him on the road to London, she began to feel sure, the latter had some fearful object in view. In painful apprehension, therefore, of the tidings she might too soon hear, and the shock she must then try to break to her unconscious relative, she went with her to her chamber. There, whilst she performed the office of a waiting maid to her child-like companion, who, from temporary ease of body and mind, was in the mood for talking, her heart sunk lower and lower under a heavier weight of apprehensions. It was, however, pleasing to find that Lady Villiers was really impressed with some notion of the necessity there was for her doing what her own feelings prompted for her husband, instead of sacrificing them to other persons' passions; and that she meant to offer him her company in Holland, if he chose it, that half of every year which was left at the disposal of each of the princesses and queen's ladies.

Digitized by Google

As she appeared inclined for more conversation, even after she went into bed, Eveleen took advantage of that holy ceremonial which even nominal Christians rarely dispense with, to win her into something like a heart interest in those blessed truths upon which prayer is founded. Lady Villiers, subdued by the dreaded approach of an hour which comes not to any woman without occasioning her painful anxiety at least, listened with unusual attention :—and well she might ; for Eveleen's heart was full, and she spoke earnestly. A presentiment that some awful cloud was about to burst over them, made her feel thus deeply their need of higher protection than aught human offers ; so that she laboured to bring her cousin's mind into a fitting state for sustaining it. Villiers, the prime object of thought to both, was tenderly, yet seriously discussed by Eveleen. She seized at her own reference of his great errors to his want of a religious education, for impressing upon his soft-natured wife the necessity of bringing up their child in a different manner. She mastered the misgiving of her heart, that she might paint in sweet hues, the honour and happiness which might

Digitized by Google

eventually crown even the faulty Villiers in the character of his son; and ventured to predict, that his own would one day be amended by the same principle, after having seen it put into noble action in the person of one most dear to him.

Lady Villiers was touched; she melted into tears; owned that her cousin had a right estimate of the world she had hitherto lived in as if there were no other; and promised, from that night, to make herself better acquainted with the subject which she saw it was her duty to teach her children.

It is never wise to press a powerful matter too long upon a feeble mind; and Lady Villiers requiring rest, Eveleen advised her to court it, whilst she should read to her. The proposal accepted, she opened a volume that she had brought to her cousin the day before, and by the help of her low sweet voice, and the music of poetry, fairly cast her into a deep sleep.

She herself was soon after lost in a wilderness of thoughts. Villiers wild and desperate — Lady Rhoda contemptuously repelling her hint of what she feared about him — Aura Trevanion in utter desolation of soul — the unknown fugitive — the

Digitized by Google

wronged widow of her dead cousin — Philips — his master — that honoured uncle for whose counsel she longed to agony, — all peopled that strange wilderness; yet, as objects in a delirious dream do, with ghastly rapidity and indistinctness. All was confusion — all darkness: the spirit within her seemed floating on a troubled sea, without descrying one spot for momentary rest. The impression produced by such a chaos of feelings amounted to distemperature; and more than once our poor heroine started up and looked round, to assure herself that she was awake, and actually in Lady Villiers's chamber.

Hour had followed hour. It was now far past midnight; and, except a single domestic, who sat up to admit the messenger who took the summons for the medical person, all the family were gone to bed. Eveleen, however, would not quit her station: there was no slumber either in her eyes or in her bosom; and fearfully expectant of some terrible tidings, she continued watching her cousin's awfully deep sleep — for such it seemed in her present mood — with tearless sickness of heart. She was seated in one of those large easy-chairs commonly used in the chambers of our ances-

Digitized by Google

tors, which being high in the back, and advancing their thickly-stuffed sides in a bending form, nearly enclose the person within. The one Miss Hungerford sat in was placed between Lady Villiers's bed and the inner wall of the room; so that it was completely secured from the air of the door, by the full damask curtains of the canopy, and would have excluded the sight of it also, had not the bed fronted Lady Villiers's dressing-table. In the large standing mirror there, Eveleen suddenly saw reflected, first the door slowly opened, then a man's figure bending forward, as if to spy whether he might venture further.

Immediate terror so disordered her sight, that in that instant glance she fancied a crape over the face, and she would involuntarily have uttered a cry, had not her voice as well as limbs denied its office.

By the time her vision cleared, the supposed robber had advanced into the chamber, evidently purposing to approach the bed; but abruptly stopping, he strode swiftly yet noiselessly up to the dressing-table, where lay the half-opened jewel-case, which Lady Villiers had carefully brought in with her, from her sitting-room. The

Digitized by Google

gleam of diamonds was seen through the opening, by the single shaded light burning on the table. After a moment's obvious hesitation, the intruder lifted the case, and bending his head over it, concealed his face from Eveleen's fixed and breathless gaze. She saw him raise one of the ear-rings with a tremulous hand, then drop it hastily, shut the case, and lay it down. He muttered something—perhaps her name, which was embroidered on the lining of the box; that murmured sound, stifled as it was—the now lifted face—the disordered looks, were instantly recognised by her for those of Lord Villiers. But to challenge him in such a place, and at such a moment of anxiety about his wife, over whom she was keeping watch, was impossible: she felt relieved, too, of her worst fear by his presence; and she hoped his good angel had brought him back to accept what she meant to offer him.

As he now came close to the bed where his wife lay sleeping, she scarcely drew breath. For a long time he held back one of the curtains, looking fixedly on the sleeper there—closed them with a struggling sigh—then suddenly withdrew them again, and, with a hasty action, bent to touch his

Digitized by Google

lady's cheek; but bringing his lips lower, to her arm which lay out upon the coverlid, kissed it, or rather let a kiss hover over it; and dropping the hangings once more, slowly walked out of the apartment. By his bending action, the light on the table striking upon something bright between his bosom and his vest, directed Eveleen's eye to discover, through an opening in the curtains near her, that a pistol was concealed there. Only that murderous pistol was present to her mind, when she sprang up, as if on wings, all wild and trembling. To seize her jewel-case, pencil a few words upon its satin lining, and hurry with it and her letter for her uncle, into an adjoining chamber, where the little Charles and his nurse slept, were the actions of a moment.

"Has Lord Villiers been in here?" she asked hurriedly of the startled nurse.

"No, madam."

"I heard his step but now. Cast on your gown — run and find him ere he goes. I need something done with these ornaments of mine. Just bring me Lord Villiers's word that he will oblige me."

The honest nurse seeing nothing strange in a young lady's anxiety to have her orna-

Digitized by Google

ments remodelled, made all haste to obey, and covering herself with one arm, whilst Eveleen put the slumbering child into the other whispering it was for his father to kiss, stepped quickly out of the room in search of Lord Villiers or his page.

Eveleen's heart throbbed to agony during her short absence: to her impatient apprehension it seemed an endless one. It was evident that Villiers had been overtaken by his page; had read his wife's billet, and was returned with a softened heart, but not a softened purpose, to atone, perhaps, for his stormy parting from her, by such a farewell as he hoped might afterwards soothe the anguish he was yet selfish enough to meditate dooming her to. To relieve him, therefore, in time from the frenzied desperation which was goading him to sure destruction, was the aim of our pitying heroine, to whom every instant now seemed a century. At length Dame Cicely returned. Lord Villiers had been outrageous at first sight of her and the boy, but had taken the case; and after that, became all at once kind and tender hearted.

"My lord is marvellous tender natured, in sooth, for such a wild gentleman as he

Digitized by Google

was aforetime," honest Cicely ventured to say. "His handsome face was quite wet when he'd done kissing his young worship here. I shall always stand up for him since I saw him jump into the water to save blind Peter."

"Lord Villiers has many good qualities," returned Eveleen, pleased with this reminder of one instance that helped to justify her hopes of him; but willing to make light of the recent occurrence, added, "I thank you greatly, Cicely, for disturbing your rest to please my girlish whim. You shall have a new head-gear for it, I promise you;" and turning away, she paused in the entrance of her cousin's chamber, to relieve her full heart by a glad burst of tears and thanksgivings. So agitated had she been throughout this eventful day, so utterly beaten down when this new alarm occurred, that she fancied she could not have borne one feather's weight in addition. This blessed ending of her worst apprehension was, consequently, almost joy; and retaking her seat by the side of her cousin's bed, she watched there with subsiding spirits. Lady Villiers slept ill towards morning, and at each temporary

Digitized by Google

awakening complained of great uneasiness. Miss Hungerford thought it right to tell her that Lord Villiers had come and gone, taking with him from her what she trusted would terminate his distress for money: but she withheld every thing alarming; and had the delight of seeing Lady Villiers testify livelier emotion than ordinary of the pleasurable kind, ere she once more composed herself, after taking a lulling medicine to quiet bodily pain. Eveleen now deemed it incumbent upon her to let Lady Rhoda know that her daughter was particularly indisposed; and as soon as she heard her bell rung, left Lady Villiers under her maid's care, whilst she went to report her state to her matron mother.

Fortunate, indeed, for Eveleen's after-feelings was this promptitude. Before Lady Rhoda had been half an hour with her daughter, the latter grew decidedly ill —the expected advice arrived — more assistance was summoned: Lady Rhoda crowded her daughter's anti-room with experienced practitioners of both sexes, — was herself prodigal of exhortations, instructions, rebukes; went to and fro ordering and countermanding, turning a

Digitized by Google

deaf ear to Eveleen's entreaties that Lord Villiers might be followed and brought back. Lady Villiers herself, in faint accents, breathed out upon her cousin's bosom, — "Oh, send, send! — if I am to die — let me but see *him*." Eveleen disappeared the next instant: she was always bold in a right cause.

What is the human heart when fevered by strong resentment? Lady Rhoda, though she saw her daughter hanging between life and death, though she loved that daughter as well as she was capable of loving any thing, yet felt fierce pleasure in imagining she might soon have to reproach her son-in-law with having murdered her whose last embrace she would, if possible, have kept from him.

The billet of recal, written and despatched by the swiftest courier in Rohesia, Miss Hungerford would have returned to take her trembling station once more by the bedside of Lady Villiers, but entrance to her cousin's chamber was now denied her: increased danger demanded the absolute exclusion of all useless attendants, and Eveleen was left to abide alone, through four long hours, the mingled agonies of

Digitized by Google

suspense, sympathy with extreme suffering, and horror lest her poor cousin might not live to see her lord.

Those dark hours ended, and her door was opened by one of Lady Villiers's women, whose face told her errand. Eveleen started up at sight of that pale countenance, and would have passed through the doorway in wild hope that she might yet be in time, but the servant put her back with a strong hand, and closed the door behind them. "It is of no use now, madam!" was her piteous exclamation. Eveleen fell back into the seat from which she had just risen, stunned with the direful tidings.

Lady Villiers was, indeed, no more. In giving birth to a dead child, her own life had ended. She lay now, cold and still, on that pillow where Eveleen had so lately seen her husband gazing at her, with an expression that directed all apprehension then to his person. When tears and sobs succeeded to brief insensibility in our afflicted heroine, with what comfort did she remember the discourse she had held with her poor cousin that night! every glimmer of dawn in Lady Villiers's expressions, every promise she had made of future ap-

Digitized by Google

plication to what she had so long neglected, every kindly word of her husband, and every sentence of the short prayer she had repeated kneeling, now came in gushes of consolation, sweetening the bitterness of her grief, and preaching submission to Heaven's will.

The feeble spirit just departed was beyond the reach of prayer's efficacy, but the living soul of Villiers was yet capable of help. To pray that this awful dispensation might do its work upon him, was Eveleen's first impulse, and she did it with fervency; but even from her knees she was summoned to succour Lady Rhoda, who being forced from the mourning chamber, was abandoned to that frightful excess of grief which horror-strikes those, accustomed to humble themselves under the great hand that smites them.

Eveleen's blood chilled when she saw her. Lady Rhoda lay upon the floor of her apartment, where she obstinately resisted every attempt to raise her; alternately invoking vengeance upon the husband whose imperious command had virtually hurried his wife out of life, and challenging Providence to say what she had ever done to

Digitized by Google

deserve such a calamity as this loss of her only child! Wrung hands, a beaten breast, uncontrolled sobs, and, at times, shrieks of awakening despair, were the testimonials of her maternal sorrow. In vain did Eveleen wait to hear one weeping supplication to the God whom those wild cries invoked — one lowly confession, that our greatest calamities are, at the utmost, merciful, because needful chasteners. It was the sorrow of a bad spirit in agony that she was called upon to witness: she saw that its mixed hopes had been all of this world; and those worldly hopes stricken with her who was to realize them, the glorious prospects of a higher existence, were dark and distasteful.

This, indeed, was being in the shadow of death; and Eveleen felt herself under its black cloud, with a horror unknown before. Never did she turn with more eager gratefulness to those hopes and promises, of which she had then blessed assurance within her; and to which, if she could have brought all that lived, by the immediate sacrifice of her young life, at that moment of rare exaltation she would joyfully have laid it down. But far less was required of

Digitized by Google

her; and a humbler achievement was destined to reward her powerless desires.

Lady Rhoda not only spurned every thing like consolation, even when presented in the name that is itself consolation, but accused her gentle niece of unfeelingness, when the latter weepingly hastened to relieve her aunt from the dreadful belief of her daughter's death being occasioned by Lord Villiers's violence of temper. She repeated all of his conversation with his wife, and all Lady Villiers's to herself, to prove that no such excess of arbitrariness on his side, nor dangerous emotion on hers, had existed. She reminded Lady Rhoda of her daughter's unlucky fall, and subsequent indisposition; adding, with fresh bursts of tears, that she blamed herself for having allowed herself to be deceived into tranquillity about her dear cousin, by the latter's kind willingness to suffer secretly; since now the opinion of those who could not err upon such subjects, was, that by this dreadful fall, the babe had perished, and the injury sustained then by its mother laid the foundation —— the sentence needed not finishing: Lady Rhoda, for whose soothing it was sobbingly uttered by one who longed

Digitized by Google

to go and weep unrestrainedly alone, repulsed it with frantic vehemence; maintaining that her daughter had died from the joint effects of her lord's fury, and of his ruined affairs, seeing them irretrievable. It seemed to relieve her grief, this keeping some object to rail at; and Eveleen was finally driven away by the horror of her aunt's ravings.

She retreated to a distant quarter of the house, whither the poor motherless boy and his nurse had been sent, on the first seizure of Lady Villiers; and there she found them: the latter, dropping her scalding tears over the unconscious infant, as it sprung and laughed in her arms, endeavouring to lisp sounds which fond hearts love.

It may be supposed with what a pang Eveleen took the bereaved boy from Dame Cicely, and adding bitterer tears to hers, sat down to wait in silence for Lord Villiers's approach.

Dismal as his return must prove, to be sure that he had not resumed his fatal purpose, to indulge a hope that what he had to behold might make a blessed impression upon him for life, were the

Digitized by Google

thoughts and wishes which occupied Eveleen during the time of this sad watching. Oh, how often was her heart torn by the smiling-offered kiss and pretty playfulness of the poor babe she clasped to her breast, sorrowing for its present loss, and trembling for its future fate! Happy children, in a house of mourning, are like the flowers we strew over a beloved corse in the coffin —sad —sad as sweet!

When the hoofs of a horse at full speed were heard in the sweep before the house (for every gate had been purposely left open), our heroine flew into the corridor, and, along it, to the top of the principal staircase, bending over the balustrade to ascertain who entered.

It was Lord Villiers: his wild enquiry for his wife rang through the vaulted roofs a note of long remembered fearfulness: Eveleen saw his swift ascent up the under flight of stairs; his unconscious throwing off some kind hand that would have pulled him back from the entrance to Lady Villiers's suite of apartments: she guessed the rest.

She was yet hanging by the gilded railings of the flight she had partly descended,

Digitized by Google

in irresolution and intense interest, when she saw the door of the outer room open again, and Villiers borne senseless between two of the medical gentlemen who had considerately waited for his return.

Literally deaf to their offered attempts of breaking a great shock to him, he had burst from the grasp of one, and the voice of the other, to rush into the chamber of sorrow. The array of death upon the bed, at once told what had been passing there; and ere he reached half way to it, he fell his length upon the floor.

The widowed, self-accusing husband was conveyed to a distant sleeping room, where after several lesser efforts to bring back life had failed, a vein was opened, and he breathed — he stirred, but he spoke not a word, nor once looked up; although it was evident, from this very silence, and by incessant deep sighings, that he retained full consciousness of what had brought him into the state he was in. Such stillness, under such circumstances, is ever alarming; and all discourses to their patient, therefore, except those of a soothing kind, were forbidden by the physicians, until the extent of the shock he had endured could be

Digitized by Google

ascertained. Lady Rhoda Brandon insisting upon seeing him, her entrance was not objected to; since it was to be presumed she came to mingle lamentations with her son-in-law, and might melt him, therefore, into salutary tears.

Who could suppose she demanded admittance, only to aggravate compunctious sorrow into madness?

Lady Rhoda came from that interview with the aspect of a demon. From herself alone, could Eveleen learn the nature of her conversation with the stricken husband; and such information was withheld. The effect of her savage vindictiveness could not for some days be judged of. Having completed her great object, she installed herself in all the pomp of woe, with its ordinary formalities of closed doors, darkened shutters, and pall-like garments. In truth, after satiating her vengeful temper, she did yield at length, to something akin to maternal sorrow.

As Lady Rhoda could not endure the helpless memorial of her daughter — whose smiling looks were indeed daggers' points even to Eveleen Hungerford — the latter possessed herself of him almost wholly;

Digitized by Google

finding beneficial occupation in ministering to his wants: tearfully thinking, that if departed spirits know what is passing in the world they have quitted, her once regardless cousin would be considering her now with just approval, and assurance of her affectionate remembrance.

Whether the delirious fever, which had been apprehended for Lord Villiers, had really seized him, our heroine knew not; for the physicians had taken their leave, by Lady Rhoda's orders, and Villiers, no longer under restraint, was shut up in the death chamber, where he refused every one admittance.

Whether he were there, in sullenness of despair, or with a softened heart — whether he bowed to, or defied Almighty Power, Eveleen feared to conjecture: his lawless nature and impatient temper were too well known to her. He had not yet seen, nor asked to see his boy; and anxious to try the effect of his innocent caresses upon that proud or fierce sorrow, she wandered about from room to room, like some melancholy ghost, bearing the little Charles in her arms.

Late in the evening of the day, after

Digitized by Google

Lord Villiers's return, when certain mournful preparations required free entrance into the chamber whence he excluded every one, she took her station in the further room of the suite, thinking it likely he would pass by that way out, if induced to quit his sad watching by a message carried to his door by the weeping nurse. This room was, in fact, the favourite lounging place of poor Lady Villiers: for she dressed in it, when the occasion was important enough to privilege her in going through that operation, in company with such chosen female intimates as were willing to waste time in amusing her and themselves, by experiments upon the effects of different ornaments; and she loved to loiter there, before she went to rest for the night, playing indifferent music indifferently upon her guitar. Eveleen was often of her party there; and remembering many an hour wasted in its trifling occupations, looked round on the luxurious furniture, hitherto scarcely heeded, with an awakened sense.

In the centre stood a toilette of laced satin, furnished, as costly toilettes are, with glittering receptacles for more glittering

Digitized by Google

trinkets. Above it an alabaster lamp in the shape of a Grecian patera, suspended by chains of frosted silver, threw a soft light like that of the moon, over hangings of silk, mouldings of mother of pearl, and tables of fretted ivory. Basins, of the same shape and transparent material as the lamp, added their fainter gleams to its sweet light, diffusing round the apartment the breath of beautiful exotics, which it had been the Lady Villiers's pleasure to see daily renewed; and which, with thrilling exactness, her page yet mechanically brought thither.

Eveleen looked on those glowing flowers resting on the lucid alabaster: she breathed Arabia, — she stood on the snowy fleeces of Cashmire; the gold of the new world, the gems of the old, were spread out before her in this delicious apartment. But where, what, was its former inhabitant? Her heart was iced within her, as she questioned this; and turning her eyes from all that made that heart so humble, she felt that excessive indulgence of any kind is not for mortal man. As she sat down on one of the velvet cushions, the little innocent in her arms stretched out its hand to grasp the riband

Digitized by Google

of its mother's guitar — and struck, in the vain attempt, the now useless strings. The sound they gave, thrilled through every vein of Eveleen: it seemed the voice of her poor cousin; and she burst into an agony of tears. Flood after flood had gushed forth, and passed away, when the sudden apparition of the widowed Villiers startled her by its suddenness. No living Villiers — she could scarcely believe it! for his face, his figure, his hollow eye, and hollower voice, bore witness that the ravages of mental suffering, are not much inferior to those of death itself. He stood looking upon her, and the child, in frightful stillness; then snatched up his boy, and disappeared by the way he came. Anxious for the child, and apprehensive of every act of its father's, Eveleen was justified in following them as quickly and noiselessly as possible. When she gained the gloomy chamber, which she had not entered since Lady Villiers' death, and closed the door behind her with a convulsive sigh, Lord Villiers looked back from the side of the bed: she saw there were no tears upon his cheek, or in his eye, — no movement in his features; he looked wound up to the performance of

Digitized by Google

some desperate or awful act. Tears yet hung upon her pale cheeks, but those in her eyes were dried up by nameless apprehension.

"You do not come to reproach me!" he cried, with stern misery of tone; "yet if you do, you may; I care not! I know I killed her — I deny it not! I am going to pass sentence upon myself; death is too happy for such an one as me!"

"Cousin, dear Lord Villiers!" Eveleen repeated faintly, her whole body shaking at the strange fire of his eyes, "it was not you, — Heaven's will alone ——"

"No holy lying to me!" he madly interrupted. "Her mother spoke the truth,— the merciless truth! My violence, — the frenzy I was driven to, — the way in which I went from her, without look or kiss! She guessed my desperate purpose, — her mother says she guessed it! and I would not return till my very servant gave me up!"

Eveleen now comprehended that it was not his bereavement but his guiltiness, unjustly aggravated to him, which was thus maddening Lord Villiers; she endeavoured to make him hear her earnest assurance,

Digitized by Google

that her cousin had never suspected his fatal purpose: but the wild ocean, in its wildest rage, is not less restrainable than was his tempestuous grief; his roused soul, poured forth in heightened confessions of every past offence against his wife, in professions of self-detestation, and vows of self-punishment.

"You will not resume that horrid intent?" Eveleen questioned, aghast and trembling.

"Oh no!" was his answer. "Did I not say, death was too good for me now? I will do penance, by living. After I have seen this murdered one laid in the grave, I will wander, — wander my life out, far from every thing I love. Here, on his shrouded mother, I take leave of my boy!" and he held the unconscious child above the senseless clay that lay beneath, still and pale as monumental marble.

There was determination, as well as distraction in the excited looks of Lord Villiers. Eveleen besought him to consider, that he would be adding real guilt to a fancied crime, were he to desert his motherless boy.

"Think, you," he enquired, with some-

Digitized by Google

thing of his former bitter irony, "that I am so able a teacher of religion and morality? Would not good lessons choke me in the uttering? No! he shall at least bless my memory, for giving him into better hands than mine own. I'll have him taught to love and reverence every thing I was taught to hate, or scoff at."

"Oh, bless you for this!" exclaimed Eveleen; tears,—delightful tears, raining over her cheeks and fervently clasped hands.

"True or false, they make man happier!" he resumed impetuously; "so he shall think them true."

"Then is his mother's last prayer heard!" ejaculated Eveleen.

"Prayer!—what prayer?" he repeated. "She had not time to pray."

"Before she suffered greatly, indeed she had,—she prayed earnestly for him, and you."

"When!—when! If this be true, then am I doubly damned for killing her."

Eveleen hastened to take advantage of the stupor which momentarily fixed Lord Villiers, to efface the direful impression which she had at first referred solely to his

Digitized by Google

own perturbed fancy: briefly detailing to him the circumstances which preceded her cousin's death. Medical experience could neither be mistaken as to the period in which the unborn babe had ceased to live, nor in considering this awful event as its sure consequence. The passionate exclamations by which the eager husband frequently broke her short narrative, gave her full information of Lady Rhoda's barbarous falseness in delivering her own accusations as those of a dying wife. It was too evident that, overwhelmed at once by conscience and by unchristian harshness, the unhappy Villiers was driven from the shallow anchorage his soul had taken on better purposes, and hurled back into violence and despair. Now, whilst Eveleen's gentle voice spoke in that spirit which bruiseth not the broken reed, his complexion varied from red to pale, from light to darkness, and so back again; every feature quivered: at length he threw himself upon the bed, and as his burning forehead touched the icy one of his dead wife, murmured, "How little do I deserve this great — great comfort!"

Eveleen saw the softening power was

Digitized by Google

working in him, and she went on, showing how unconscious his wife had been of his fatal purpose; — how contented with her cousin's proposal of lending him the money he needed; — how satisfied, that if he had gone back to London, it was in justifiable anger at Lady Rhoda, not at herself. Then she added to this, the poor lady's kind project of giving half the year to his experiment of living abroad, and the glad hopes she entertained from it.—When she repeated her serious resolution of teaching her child his duty, Lord Villiers raised his head.

"Little should I have heeded this, hadst thou been in life, Di!" he exclaimed, looking down on the silent face; "but now! — Here, then, I take Heaven to witness, that never, whilst I have breath, shall the accursed passion that wrecked me——"

"Oh, do not — do not swear!" Eveleen ejaculated, sinking down by the bed; lifting up hands, eyes, heart, to the Heaven he invoked, in agony of supplication for him, — "pray, rather, that you may hold on, in what you would——"

Lord Villiers's surprised look flashed over her. "Not resolve against my vices!"

Digitized by Google

"Yes — yes, resolve: — but think not to keep your resolution, in proud neglect of what gives us all the strength we have," returned Eveleen, trembling with eagerness and the dread of failing in her aim. "For once, Lord Villiers, try the effect of humbling yourself to Him, before whom we are all guilty." As she broke off, the expression of her pale cheek and lifted eye had something holy in them, seen as they were by the sombre light of that solemn chamber.

He gazed at her, and on his boy with its little hands pressed together in hers: new feelings rose and struggled in the father's breast: he looked at the child as though he would have looked his soul away; then, suddenly snatching it to his lips, burst into a tempest of tears. "Do you, pray for me!" at length he said, in a suffocated voice, as resigning the child, he slid down upon one knee, and bowed his forehead on the bed.

Eveleen did indeed address Heaven for him, but it was inwardly: — she could not speak for joyful tears, and had not, perhaps, found words upon the instant. His impetuous weeping, stifled as it was by the

Digitized by Google

position of his face, was long the only audible sounds in that sad chamber; the poor babe dropped asleep in Eveleen's arms, and not even the convulsive agitation of its father disturbed its peaceful rest.

It was some time before Lord Villiers found voice to speak; when he did so, he just raised his face, and thanking her for all her kindness, begged to be left alone.

"Fear nothing for me now, Eveleen," he added, seeing her look of anxious hesitation. "I am better. I think I can bear now, all that must follow this;" and he looked with piercing, but sedate grief at the shrouded face upon the pillow. "I will lay her in her coffin — no other hand! — I will follow her to the grave — and then! — Heaven do with me what it pleaseth!"

Eveleen, choking with mingled feelings, turned to go away; but, with much of his natural impetuosity, Lord Villiers caught his child out of her arms again, and with a fresh gust of stormy tears, exclaimed — "One last kiss to your poor mother, my Charles!" and would have pressed its little face close to that of his unconscious wife, whilst exclaiming, "Oh that I had loved her better!" had not the watchful Eveleen

Digitized by Google

interposed her hand between the startled babe's lips and that iced cheek, receiving herself the shock, even to her heart, which she thus spared the poor innocent.

Lord Villiers saw its effect by her deathly change of countenance, and repenting of his precipitancy, accused himself of selfish inconsideration. — "Such as you, will bear with me awhile," he said, gratefully looking at her efforts to hush his crying boy; "but there is one here, that will not. I pray you keep her from me, if possible. I cannot command myself when she taunts me; yet I know I have deserved them all. Leave me — leave me now."

Eveleen hastened to obey: her own heart longed for solitary relief; and hailing this moderated feeling towards his mother-in-law, as the dawn of true repentance in the bosom of Lord Villiers, she withdrew silently.

Lord Villiers's forbearance towards his wife's mother, lasted throughout the whole of the trying week which he passed at Rohesia. He neither interfered with, nor appeared to notice her arrangement of personages and carriages, with which the niece

Digitized by Google

of Lord Carraton was to be carried to the tomb of her ancestors.

Sadly content to follow first in the train of mourners destined to accompany the corse to a far distant country, he gave no head to vexatious trifles, nor allowed himself otherwise to answer Lady Rhoda's reproachful challenge of his extraordinary and, as she called it, barbarous composure, than by referring her to that medical report which, he owned, had saved him from distraction.

It may be supposed that Villiers had not rested in Eveleen's agitated details alone. Servants, nurses, and physicians were subsequently seen and sifted; and the result was entire conviction, that he was at least free from the guilt of having caused his lady's death; and that, used to witness his caprices and violences without troubling herself to consider them deeply, the easy wife had not even felt a momentary misgiving.

To Eveleen's joy, this conviction, instead of bringing back arrogance with ease of mind, produced the less ordinary effect of creating gratitude; and Lord Villiers, who had seared himself against every inward doubt and outward argument for divine go-

Digitized by Google

vernment and human responsibility, when smarting under the yoke of his own passions, once touched with a sense of being mercifully freed from deserved punishment, felt glad to seek, and desirous of finding, a benefactor to bless and trust to.

As yet, however, those thoughts and feelings were confined to his unshared meditations by night and day; for Miss Hungerford, having done her part, left all the remainder to be perfected by unerring wisdom. She conjectured the workings of Lord Villiers's mind, from their effect upon his conduct. That he was serious in his present endeavour of curbing his imperious temper, she saw by his passiveness under Lady Rhoda's many contradictions of his understood wishes; and all her hopes and fears, therefore, were centered in his continuance of such worthy efforts.

Upon one matter Lord Villiers decidedly acted in opposition to Lady Rhoda's will. He refused her the superintendence of his child; and choosing to have him brought up in the simplest habits, remote from flattery and temptation to self-indulgence, placed him with an honest-hearted woman, the wife of a decent farmer, whose children he

Digitized by Google

was to associate with upon equal terms, and whose moral education was consequently to be shared by the little Villiers, until that of the mind became necessary.

The night before Lord Villiers quitted Cornwall with the mournful cavalcade for Derbyshire, he commended his child to Miss Hungerford's kind observation; but, with strict charge, not to let herself, or others, awaken in him one idea of self-consequence or self-gratification. She learnt from him then, that upon being overtaken by the express which summoned him, as he fancied, only to his wife in possible danger, he had happily despatched his confidential page forward with the important case of jewels, assured that by depositing that with a certain Jew, memorable for fidelity to such charges, a sufficient sum would be obtained for regaining the pledge, upon which all his earthly prospects rested. He told her, that it was his purpose now, to visit his ruinous and deeply-mortgaged estate in Sussex, and thence go to his uncle Buckingham, and solicit his permission to travel abroad for awhile, simply as a traveller, that he might take time there to consider what career in life he should henceforth

Digitized by Google

pursue. Eveleen need not doubt his first efforts would be to redeem her precious loan to him.

Little did Eveleen care for jewelled ornaments now; and, but for fear of being misinterpreted by others hereafter, would have bidden him think no more of their restitution: as it was, she testified implicit confidence in his future will and ability; and seizing so favourable an opportunity for throwing him in the way of a better guide than herself, commissioned him with her love and duty to her beloved uncle Lake, now settled in his see of Chichester. That city lay in the way of Lord Villiers, when he should have acquitted his last sad duty to his departed wife, and turned homewards. The pale face of the young lord flushed, yet not forbiddingly, as he promised to stop at the episcopal residence, and tell the venerable prelate much that his niece had not present power to write. As Eveleen looked on the sudden glow, she prayed that it might be the herald of ingenuous shame. A fervent pressure of the hand — a long look of grateful affection — a deep, deep sigh of memory, on the side of Lord Villiers, marked his parting with her who,

Digitized by Google

in his case, had ever been earnest against the sin, but compassionate of the sinner. Eveleen, much affected, yet full of hopes for him of the highest order, smiled through gathering tears; and inarticulately renewing her separate promises to him about his boy, and her ever continued interest in himself, softly withdrew, to think of her whose cold remains, were on the morrow, to be carried whence they would no more return.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VI.

It is not seldom that we see death after death, succeed in the same family. There seems a gracious economy in this: for the human heart can hold but a certain portion of sorrow as of joy; and what overfloweth, runs to waste. Lord Hungerford's funeral cavalcade were scarcely gone from the vault of his ancestors, than plumed hearse and scutcheoned banners, horsemen and horses cloaked in black, mourners of show, with one true mourner at their head, were seen traversing the same counties for the same solemn destination.

Eveleen Hungerford put on deeper mourning, both in her mind and person, for the cousin latest taken: she fancied, indeed, that she should never smile again.

Death is awful at all times: but what can equal the impression made by its earliest inroad upon our happiness? The grief we then feel, has the bitter addition of all our prospective losses: we mourn at once over many graves; — graves yet with-

Digitized by Google

out their occupants! For our first bereavement, even though it be not our best-loved friend that is taken, unseals the prophetic eye of the soul, and shows us the apparitions of many a future woe, dimly, and surely approaching. To Eveleen's distempered apprehension, an invisible shaft appeared, aiming at all the objects of her affection: and, as if she had never before known of death, or reflected upon death, she began to calculate, with sickening dismay, the age or infirmities of the few she dearly loved.

So much easier is it for the tender heart to look calmly upon its own great change, than to reconcile itself to the dissolution of its dear companions! So long is it, before even the most heavenly-minded pilgrim on earth can so realize the place he is journeying to, as to see his path stripping of every flower, yet forbear to sigh over their loss!

Eveleen thought of Aura Trevanion, as one not likely to buffet long with the storm of life; and that idea at once reopened the sluices of anxious sympathy. During the late short period following their last scene together, her very image had been blotted from Eveleen's mind: deeper and darker

Digitized by Google

interests engrossed it; and if a wandering wish or regret, of which the unhappy Miss Trevanion was the object, entered her thoughts, it was dismissed as though it profaned a sanctuary.

The same feeling had caused her to shrink from mixing up any matters, foreign to his private grief, in her parting discourse with Lord Villiers; therefore, she had let him go without obtaining satisfaction on the subject of his generous wish, to help the poor young lady whom he had once so essentially served. But Eveleen began now to feel how important his assistance might prove, and she looked forward to the period in which she might apply for it, with reviving impatience.

The late sad event imposed certain restraints, which must condemn her for awhile to perfect inaction in an affair wherein she had so long embarked every warm and generous energy. It was grievous to remain in a state of utter darkness, respecting what had occurred in Treverderet since her last visit. She dreaded some irrevocable act of fury from Sir Fulk Trevanion, or some subtle instigation of his nephew: she feared, too, that Miss Trevanion might be driven

Digitized by Google

into the desperation of revealing all she could tell of Colonel Trevanion; and such a disclosure, unsupported by evidence, was sure to produce only her own ruin. The fact of Dunbar's treacherous betrayal of Philips's letter, rested upon Lord Villiers's testimony; that of his secret correspondence with the jesuit confessor, upon Susannah Hollis's report from Lord Danby's page. Was it likely, then, that Sir Fulk Trevanion would consider either witness, as worthy a hearing? Was it not more probable, that by the home-traitor's artifices, Aura Trevanion would be made to appear the culprit? Eveleen shuddered at the possible consequence of such a misfortune: either the disgraceful expulsion of her unhappy friend from the paternal roof, or a forced marriage for her, or her early death. The last fancy was now the one most sure to fasten upon Eveleen's mind; and she wept it, in anticipation, with a force and frequency arising from the weakened state into which all her better thoughts were thrown by the sudden wrecks in her own family. It was very grievous for her to look daily towards a boundary, beyond which her friend dwelt, and which she might no

Digitized by Google

longer pass. To be far, far from her, appeared at moments less insupportable: yet, when she was told she was to quit Rohesia, she felt desirous of still lingering there, as her only chance of seeing the afflicted Aura.

According to the usual custom after certain melancholy events, it was deemed right for Lady Rhoda Brandon to move herself and niece from Cornwall. It was first proposed that they should both join Lord Carraton at his town residence, whither he had gone after meeting the funeral of Lady Villiers at the family vault. But, at Eveleen's earnest petition, she was permitted to devote her time of seclusion to her uncle Lake; Lady Rhoda being secretly resolved to prosecute anew the matter of degrading the widow of Lord Hungerford, and wishing to send her niece out of Lord Woodvill's way, who was now expected from abroad.

Unheeding of her aunt's motives, Eveleen thanked her for the permission; looking forward with the only animated hope left within her, to her uncle's affectionate welcome, and to his valuable counsel for her guidance in all that concerned the

Digitized by Google

Trevanions. She was, however, grieved at leaving the poor motherless child of her poor cousin, now almost orphaned by its father's purposed expatriation. There was no one to whom she could trust for conscientious guard over the child, in case any disabling accident happened its foster mother, except her own attached attendant, Damaris Flavel. It is true, the spirits of Damaris were again in a state of great perturbation, from the awful scenes in which she had shared with the other inmates of Rohesia; but she seemed ill-inclined to leave Cornwall before the return of Frank Hollis, who had, she said, besought her to wait until he should make a last effort to obtain his master's consent to their marriage; hoping, as he did, that such a petition, enforced by his faithful execution of his appointed duty in London, would find a more favourable reception than when first hazarded.

Miss Hungerford, therefore, saw she was gratifying her simple attendant as much as herself, when she proposed leaving her behind, to report the well-doing of little Villiers, and to communicate all she might hear of the family at Treverderet. Damaris was

Digitized by Google

not so much in Eveleen's confidence as Susanah Hollis was in that of her lady; but she knew that her mistress occasionally visited Miss Trevanion, and that lately, in one of Sir Fulk's strange moods, he had forbidden their friendly intercourse; and she, therefore, undertook the latter commission with a previously awakened attention:—then fell into a sudden stupor, as it seemed; from which Eveleen's repeated alarmed questionings, drew her, only to burst into successive passions of tears.

As her lady could get nothing from her, except unintelligible ejaculations of hope and fear, and pathetic appeals to Heaven for right guidance, the former naturally attributed such a paroxysm, to Damaris's foreboding of disappointment in her affections, and she comforted her accordingly; little suspecting that the poor girl was yearning to confess all she knew of Mr. Trevanion's history, but feared to do so, lest such a confidence might compromise the safety of her dear mistress. What future circumstances might produce, was a matter of hope; at present, there was little chance of any news from Treverderet travelling to a dweller at Rohesia. Some time since,

Digitized by Google

Mistress Flavel had been sorrowfully warned by Dame Hollis not to visit her cottage, in consequence of Sir Fulk Trevanion's reiterated order; and Susannah Hollis, never having been met beyond the great gates since the day of Miss Hungerford's expulsion, it was too probable that both she and her lady were virtually imprisoned.

Eveleen saw she must relinquish every expectation of learning the situation of her friend ere she quitted Cornwall: her heart was ready to break at the thought; yet was there no remedy, except she would expose herself to detection and insult by some clandestine measure. A few more days and they would be widely separated. The sole remaining chance for a parting look was, a possible meeting at Sabbath duties; and to their parish church, therefore, she went on the hallowed day, with awakened hope.

Yet there, she sought in vain for the darkly-fringed downcast eyes of her sorrowful friend. Only Colonel Trevanion alternately stood or knelt, behind the high screen-work of his uncle's pew, with well-dissembled reverence of what he listened to. More than once she looked abhorringly away from him; then chid herself for such an unholy

Digitized by Google

emotion in such a place. Softer and sadder feelings were gathering in her.

In the house of prayer, sorrowful hearts find their sanctuary and their Siloam: within walls dedicated to our Heavenly Father, remembered mercies as well as remembered griefs come upon us in their fullest power: tears flow, therefore; but not always sad tears; for there, the dear departed are thought of, not as insensible clay, but as living and rejoicing spirits.

The peculiar circumstances of Lady Villiers's death, the intimate knowledge of her harmless intentions, and the belief that her uselessness and moral ignorance were the faults of a pernicious education, made our heroine consider the poor lady's memory with tenderer affection than she had ever borne her living self. She wept, to think how short had been her poor cousin's last moments of better purposes; and had Eveleen professed that appalling creed, which founds all hope of eternal happiness upon our own full performance of commanded duties, she must have despaired for the relative she mourned. But she used scripture in a humbler (may it not be said, in a holier?) spirit; meekly acknow-

Digitized by Google

ledging the inadequacy of all human excellence; joyfully embracing the offer of a sinless substitute.

At quitting the church, where a lifeless minister chilled the word of life, Eveleen observed Susannah Hollis slowly passing out by another door. Colonel Trevanion, evidently suspicious of the girl's movements, followed on her path, keeping her in sight until both she and himself were no longer discernible. But in this haste to dispose of one evil, he left another in operation; for he overlooked the grey-headed Saulay, who lifting his beadsman's bonnet with a significant glance of his pale blue eye, as Lord Carraton's niece passed, tremulously followed her along the churchyard. Agitated by the old man's look, Eveleen turned into a rural lane, which, though now unshaded by its leafless trees, was well concealed by the steepness of its banks. Thither sped the aged beadsman, and taking a paper from his breast, slipped it silently into her ready hand. Not a word was exchanged; the only language between them was the tears and tremblings of their equal emotion: the next moment he was gone, and the paper unfolded.

Digitized by Google

As Miss Hungerford expected, it proved a letter from her friend; but one so blotted, and irregularly written, that, in idea, she saw the trembling hand and weeping eyes which had been employed over it: her own, poured fast at the imagination.

The letter began with a pathetic expression of sorrow, at being tempted into such a transgression of a father's command. But she could not, she said, go, perhaps for ever, from the friend who had so often ministered to her afflicted spirit, without sending the poor assurance of her Aura's sympathy with her distresses; and the comfort of knowing, that the feeble heart she had so often strengthened by the best of medicines, maintained its reliance on Providence, both for herself and the brother dearer than self.

Miss Trevanion went on to say, that resting on such support, she could wait the event of her friend's exertions for Arundell's redemption of character; although all hope of saving the heirship for him, would soon cease.

Dunbar Trevanion, soon after Eveleen's last visit, had executed a twofold commission from his uncle. The first was, that

Digitized by Google

he had Sir Fulk's command to seek another wife, that no more delay might arise in the latter's legal adoption of his nephew; the second contained Sir Fulk's deepest and closely-hidden reason for this haste in casting off his son and his son's children. "The deceiver told me," Miss Trevanion wrote, "that he had himself been induced to hope, that my brother, though certainly intriguing through his servant's agency for Monmouth's support, had not been personally in the rebellion; which, indeed, accounted to him, he said, for the duke's discourtesy in refusing him permission to enter his camp in search of Arundell; that in such hope he had sounded my father upon the possibility of forgiveness for Arundell, supposing the latter ready to re-enter into his duties as a son and a subject: but that my father, at once and for ever, ended the matter by telling him then, what he now had leave to tell me, for my miserable satisfaction; — to wit, that Arundell having married a daughter of Monmouth, by the infamous Lady Harriet Wentworth, could not be made blacker, if he had shared in his father-in-law's enterprise, nor less dishonoured if absent from it.

Digitized by Google

"Eveleen!" Miss Trevanion proceeded to say, "this blow, mightily as it shook me, did not kill, — for I disbelieved the tale. You will think, grievingly and truly, that with my ordinary infirmity of over quickness, I did accuse Dunbar of having hatched the scandal himself. When he answered me, methought the marvellous whiteness of his visage, had a devilish triumph, rather than fear in it, as he said deridingly, that for once I paid his genius too high a compliment. The king having been the person that pretended to prove the matter to my father, when he broke to him that Arundell was in Monmouth's camp; and that Sir Fulk himself might be enquired of, whether it were not from his lips that he, my cousin, learnt it.

"Be assured that I was wroth enough to challenge even His Majesty's warrant for aught so monstrous; and betook myself to calculate, that no daughter of Monmouth's could be of marriageable age. Dunbar dryly answered, that all the world knew how many years of his brief life the duke had lived in open iniquity with the faithless wife of Mr. Wentworth; and that the daughter in question, being born before

Digitized by Google

their brows were hardened, was not so young. He added, that long ago his uncle knew from Arundell himself, of his marriage with the young person who had gone over sea with Argyll in boy's attire, and who, he doubted not, was her you encountered in a similar disguise after the battle of Sedgemoor. From many minute things he referred to, Dunbar did convince me of my brother's marriage; but I am ready to go to death upon it, that he has no more made a child of Lady Harriet Wentworth's his wife, than that he shared in her parent's enterprise.

"Thanks be to God, this foul slander hath roused up my poor beaten spirit! I feel that I can now wrestle even with my father, so long as conscience bids me struggle for my brother's good name; therefore, upon the faith of his honour, and of Heaven's righteous judgments, will I live, until you, dearest and trustiest, work out some good for us.

"Since Arundell is not the brave gentleman that helped you out of the rebel's hands, I care the less for certain fond thoughts which would fain have gotten paradise down to earth again; and I may

Digitized by Google

but pray daily on my knees, that I may live to see and to love my brother's wife, whomsoever she proveth.

" With his usual feigned patience under my reproaches, Dunbar said, flatteringly, that he was sure now, I would no longer marvel at my father's cutting off succession to our family honours from the offspring of so foul a wedlock, nor resent his, my cousin's, sensibility to the shame of seeing a Trevanion disgraced. I know not well what the wretch added, about his foregone importunities to my father for bestowing the heirship upon me, since I showed such an aversion to sharing it with him; but he put to this, something about helping me to wed another, provided I would trust him with the secret of any liking I might have; and then he named the widower Lord Villiers. Well knew I, this could only be to twit me with our meeting in the Spring Garden, and I fell into such an ecstasy of passion, that had not my father been out of sorts in his chamber, I might perchance have enacted some notable imprudence. The worst I did, was to tell Dunbar I would not brook his presence another moment, and so we parted.

Digitized by Google

"Now that much meditation hath sobered my hastiness, I am content to keep silence; and abide the state into which I am fallen, — that of an ill-liked guest, rather than a daughter in a parent's house. However, all is not done that is begun; and seeing that Arundell hath merited much displeasure at my father's hand for marrying, doubtless clandestinely, I school myself to bear the sight of this over punishment for him, in the hope that when such chastisement hath done its work upon his heart, he will be brought back, to shine out in his due station, to the comfort and joy of many."

What remained of this letter may be imagined, as it consisted principally of affectionate condolements, and confessions of filial grief at observing how sorely her father's health was suffering by the continual conflict of his mind; and the information, that she was likely soon to remove with her father to London, in search, she supposed, of a bride for her cousin.

Miss Hungerford could be said only to glance over the whole; reserving a steadier reading of the blotted sheet, for a safer time. Once lodged in her own apartments,

Digitized by Google

she read, pondered, and wept over it; and if, during that sad study, she thought with more anxious tenderness of her desolate friend's removal from Cornwall, she felt the less pain in contemplating her own speedy departure; aware, too, that by going into other scenes she would have more chances of being useful in her concerns.

Her uncle Lake, made acquainted with all the past, Eveleen knew he could do easily, what she (as Lord Villiers was now situated), might not venture without impropriety, — engage him in securing evidence of Colonel Trevanion's treachery. The bishop might also set about private enquiries after the cavalier and youth, whose testimony was so important. It was obvious, that the first thing to be done was, at all risks, to unmask the traitor, and expel him from the confidence of Sir Fulk; after that, the work of reinstating the rightful heir might safely be suffered to proceed more slowly; and the venerated Bishop of Chichester's sanction of proceedings for Mr. Trevanion's clearance, would at least prevent them from being contemptuously spurned by the knight of Treverderet.

A feebler spirit than Eveleen Hunger-

Digitized by Google

ford's must have recollected with apprehension, that her rencontre with the rebel fugitives was known to the insidious Colonel Trevanion: hers, was tranquil — satisfied that he would never hazard strict questioning from his uncle, who, if aught of trouble accrued from it, would, for his honour's sake, seek out the informer.

Like her friend, she disbelieved Mr. Trevanion's union with the person named by Dunbar, nor could she admit an idea that her brave protector's companion was of the gentler sex: who — what, that interesting cavalier was, she guessed not; and as she fancied it possible that some fatal clue might be given his enemies by her confession of having met such a person under certain circumstances, terrors seized upon her. The panic ceased, when she remembered the care with which she had avoided all details of his person and bearing, when Colonel Trevanion sought to elicit them; and, once again, sunshine rested upon virtuous hopes.

It was not in our heroine's nature to leave a place, which had been so eventful to her, without strongly excited feelings. On the day previous to her journey, she left

Digitized by Google

her aunt affixing seals to doors and chests, with a strange mixture of maternal grief and worldly care, and went to bid farewell to favourite haunts; as loving natures are wont to do, when quitting long endeared residences.

More than a fortnight had passed since Eveleen crossed the threshold of Rohesia for a walk of solitary pleasure. During that short period, every thing in the domain had undergone as great a revolution as her own thoughts. Winter had set in with sudden severity; and a remarkable heavy fall of snow having come on in the night, her passage was barred along such remote paths as led to the hermitage, and the terrace boundary. Several walks, however, nearer the house, were cleared from obstruction; so she was able to gain the shore of the artificial water, and look thence through the vistas of the park.

In another mood, the winter scene thus presented, would have struck Eveleen as beautiful enough to compensate for the loss of summer verdure — it would have awakened imaginations of genii in their ivory palaces and groves of pearl; but now its stillness and uniformity, produced

Digitized by Google

by the vast sheet of snow stretched shroud-like over the earth, and the masses of that chill substance weighing down the trees, appeared ghastly. The trees, thus loaded, too strongly reminded her of the white plumed hearse, of which her shuddering eye had caught sight only a few short days before; and, as she stood looking on them, only impressions of life's brevity, and eternity's importance, were present to her mind. Whilst she was thus fixed, one of the swans broke his way through the ice forming over the water, and, by his motion, awakened her from her trance. She roused up to notice him, and promise him a provider in her absence; then, remembering that she had last fed him on the day of her poor cousin's death, turned sighing away.

Having hurried from the water side, she bent her eyes upon Treverderet, which, lying lower down than Rohesia, was distinctly visible in its bed of thick but now leafless groves. She looked long and lovingly upon those ivy-hooded towers, murmured a prayer for her who, perhaps, was yet weeping within them; and conscious that her present mental strength was inadequate to sustain the emotion of the pro-

Digitized by Google

longed walk she had meditated, hastened away to brace herself by performing an act of duty. This was to visit the motherless boy of her poor cousin; and as the plain dwelling he inhabited was only a short distance from the outer gate of Rohesia, she claimed the attendance of Damaris, and went forth, wrapped in a mantle of mourning velvet, lined with ermine, which, whilst it defended her delicate form from the keen frost, screened her whole person from observation.

At her suggestion, Lord Villiers had left his boy's wet-nurse under the same roof with him, until the period at which, at all events, she must have transferred him to another. This arrangement appeared satisfactory to all the parties concerned; and Dame Cicely showed no jealousy when he clung round the neck of his new foster-mother.

Eveleen came, not merely to kiss and weep over the pretty babe, with tender memory of his mother — a feeling which its smiling unconsciousness increased to bitterness, — but to bestow little gifts for his comfort, and the gratification of those he was intrusted to; principally, to repeat Lord

Digitized by Google

Villiers's instructions concerning his nurture.

Evening was approaching, when, with the sweet boy's kiss glowing upon her moistened cheek, she retraced her way back to Rohesia; that altered Rohesia, once the palace of gay delight! In the gloom of coming dusk, its lofty porticoes and marbled colonnades, all unlighted yet, wore a sepulchral appearance: what was stately became solemn; what gay, ghastly: for the exotic climbers, which art caused to bloom through drear December, spreading hues of beauty over the stone verandah, resembled flowers strewed over a tomb.

Impressed with this similitude, Eveleen passed swiftly through the entrance halls up to her own apartment, where she sat down by a vainly-cheering fire, to lose herself in a multitude of sad remembrances. She was deeply sunk in them, when Damaris entered with a billet and a small packet, for which, she said, one of the house-pages waited a reply without. Instantly recognising the hand-writing of Lord Woodvill, Miss Hungerford hurriedly opened the billet, and read as follows: —

"I am come hither, madam, not merely

Digitized by Google

in obedience to your commands, to report my progress in the matter wherein it hath pleased you to honour Woodvill, by employing him, but to render up a trust; by whom committed to him, you may, perchance, guess, if it sort with your pleasure to open the accompanying packet ——"

Eveleen read not the respectful conclusion; her fingers instinctively broke the seals of the packet, where she saw, embedded in cotton, one of the bracelets she had given, in aid of her ill-furnished purse, to the gipsy fugitives. The blood rushed brightly and delightfully to her cheeks at this unexpected sight — her gallant preserver had escaped then! — had not forgotten her! — she should hear of him from Lord Woodvill!

Hardly aware of what she did, she hastened to the door, and commissioned the page to tell the gentleman who sent him that she was following: then enquired where he was waiting her? and having learnt that he was shown into a lower room far remote from the quarter which the irritated Lady Rhoda inhabited, dismissed the servant.

The next instant she wished to recall the message, doubtful whether she were not

Digitized by Google

granting her company with unmaidenly readiness to one, who had some pretension and, perhaps, inclination to interpret every act of hers to his own advantage, and who might inwardly condemn her indifference to propriety. Yet how to avoid this evil, since she could not invite her indignant aunt to be of the party? how see him else this last evening of her stay in Cornwall, and communicate with him upon the subject of her friend's brother? There was no better way than taking Damaris Flavel with her to remain in an anti-room. The singleness of her views with regard to Miss Trevanion would have reassured our heroine at once, had she not felt so lively an interest in the fate of the gallant person of whom she now looked to hear; and she blushed to find that interest, more powerful in her than deference to propriety.

Agitated though she was, to a degree which threw the sensitive Mistress Flavel into sympathetic tremour, habitual decorum helped to compose Eveleen's looks, step, and voice, as she went with a notion which her heart far outran, to meet him who was to give her tidings of the unknown cavalier. Yet was there a strange tumult of dread

Digitized by Google

and delight in her breast. She would, indeed, hear that her protector was safe; she would learn his name, quality, and reputation: but might she not hear also something to blight her latent hopes respecting him? And how was she to receive Lord Woodvill? Was she in this meeting, which must be decisive of her engagement or disengagement (supposing he chose to broach the subject)—was she to let him believe that she did, in any degree, join the family feeling against his high-principled conduct in his intercourse with Lord Hungerford? Could there, then, be a moment less propitious than the present for marking her purpose of not accepting his late penitence?

In the confusion of such thoughts, Eveleen found herself at the door of a small winter room, which was yet unlighted, except by the billet wood which burnt somewhat dimly, because neglected, upon silver supporters. The fitful blazes of the wood, as they flamed up and were reflected in a large looking-glass covering the lower part of the chimney-piece, defined the outline of Lord Woodvill's figure, where he stood with his back towards her, looking down into the fire. This light fell

Digitized by Google

partially upon the rich embossments of fruit and foliage, in which the glass and a portrait surmounting it were framed, showing them to be a master-piece of Gibbon's carving; but it sufficed not to give more of the young lord than a shadowy mass of graceful dimensions; for he was wrapped in a riding cloak, his head was bent downwards, and he still wore his hat.

At the sound of the closing door, which shut with more noise from being opened tremulously, he turned hastily round, and removing his plumed beaver, at once revealed the face familiar to Eveleen's thoughts —less dazzling, however, than when she had first seen it—for a haze of sad or apprehensive feeling was over it.

It was well for her heart's secret that the velvet hood in which she had been walking, yet shaded her countenance, and so kept its bright and eloquent disorder from the penetrating glance of eyes that were now directed anxiously, almost pityingly, to hers; for tumultuous joy throbbed in all her pulses, covering her face with a succession of lovely blushes, as rich and varied as clouds at sunset. During a brief space, neither she nor Lord Woodvill spoke:

Digitized by Google

if that may be called silence, where blushing confusion upon one side, and quickened respiration on the other, proclaims strong emotion.

"Do I, indeed, see Lord Woodvill!" she exclaimed, at last; her head and heart giddy with what she knew of him, and what she had fancied of the unknown cavalier.

"It is, indeed, madam!" he returned; and the well-remembered accent thrilled through her; tuned though it now was to sad music: for whether it were the remembrances attached to her mourning garb, or some other thoughts, Lord Woodvill evidently spoke under painful impressions.

Again Eveleen pronounced his name, with an air of bewilderment; and again he answered, "Woodvill, in sooth, madam, come to lay his humble thanks at your feet for your charity to him and his companion; and to report how much of your good pleasure touching Mr. Trevanion, it is his happiness to have performed."

Oh, faithless Eveleen! her friend's brother was for an instant forgotten, whilst she eagerly enquired whether he she addressed were in any danger in England, from the assistance he had rendered to the youth he

Digitized by Google

spoke of, and how he fell into so hazardous a society?

To this enquiry Lord Woodvill answered respectfully, that when news of Monmouth's invasion reached him, he was in Ireland upon private business, which having executed, instead of returning instantly to Holland, as it was, perhaps, his duty to have done, he passed over into England, in the hope of withdrawing the only son of a distant kinswoman, the Lady Maltravers, from that ill-guided enterprise. Young Maltravers being a godson of Monmouth's, was too sure to be found in the latter's camp, where, however, Woodvill did not come up with him until the rebels were defeated, and Maltravers prisoner. The youth's release being privily purchased of his captor by the sacrifice of all Lord Woodvill had of valuable about him, the latter was obliged to trust to what he knew of Miss Hungerford's character, meaning to ask of her by letter what Providence enabled him to do in person. In the former case he must have revealed himself; in the latter he was able to remain incognito.

"And why was that needful?" Eveleen asked, with a tone of timid reproach.

Digitized by Google

"Because, madam, I wished not to have my Irish visit whispered of; that, being for a purpose displeasing to our present rulers. So, on our first meeting, I forbore to claim the honour of your acquaintance; and, on our second, I was amenable to justice, being in company with a known rebel. Now having 'scaped undetected in both my disloyal practices," he concluded, (and, for that brief moment, the smile of constitutional gaiety broke brightly through his dark moustachios,) "I venture to present myself here, and to put Woodvill's life, perchance, at your disposal."

Either consciousness or imagination gave an emphasis to the last words, which they otherwise might not have had, or Lord Woodvill's tremulous tone did intimate something beyond their plainer scope; for his fair companion blushed to crimson, and seemed all at once deprived of that ordinary presence of mind which furnishes a woman with the due notice of an equivocal speech. She took refuge, in the expression of her astonishment at her own utter forgetfulness of his person, both now and when she saw him during summer.

"I can but say, that it is now four years

Digitized by Google

and above, since I paid my first and only visit to your gracious self. At that time, you saw an unformed stripling, wilfully delivered up to a jaundiced humour, which certain studies had made him fancy a rare virtue. Since then—dare I say it?—nobler pursuits, high companionships, and better sense, have somewhat improved the mind's complexion. War-smoke, bravery of all weathers, and an addition of beard, have gone their length in marring or making that of the face. — That you should not recognize Woodvill again, seemeth not strange; but that he should ever have seen the daughter of his father's friend, without looking at her ——" Lord Woodvill stopped short in his embarrassed speech, then added with a clouded aspect — "But I am here to speak of Mr. Trevanion."

Eveleen could not forget from what scenes Lord Woodvill had lately come, and she said, tearfully, "We will talk of that noble gentleman anon, — do not conceit that I am stirring thus in a stranger's concerns, and care not for those of mine own blood. I have to thank you for all you did to help my poor cousin Hungerford."

Lord Woodvill's exclamation interrupted

Digitized by Google

her. "A stranger! of whom speak you, madam? Surely Mr. Trevanion and you ——" he broke off, with the addition of "I humbly crave pardon — I am bold beyond warrant."

The perplexed question of Eveleen and the confused answers of Woodvill now produced something like a confession on his side, of his having fancied a romance, between her and Arundell Trevanion, begun in her days of school companionship with his sister, and about to end sadly by his unwilling agency. So that when her single assurance, of not even knowing Mr. Trevanion by sight, terminated the troubled explanation, rays of joy were visibly emitted from every feature of Woodvill's face. An embarassed, yet not irksome silence ensued; and, as usual upon such occasions, the most confused was the first to speak. Eveleen wished for some assurance that her libertine cousin had died with better thoughts than he had lived; and, as she questioned Lord Woodvill upon the subject, her painful earnestness chastised whatever lively emotion the preceding explanation had excited in him.

Digitized by Google

It may not be denied, that she was not fully comforted by what Lord Woodvill had to tell:—but the narrator's own rich stores of heart were displayed in the telling, and that infused sweetness into the bitter.

How pleasingly was she affected by finding that her dearest uncle's agency had much share in the last act of Lord Hungerford, and that he was even now exerting himself to counteract Lady Rhoda in her attempt at expelling the poor widow from their family! Woodvill confessed that he had written more than once to the bishop during Hungerford's illness.

"My uncle knows, then, that you are the cavalier to whom we are so justly indebted?" Eveleen questioned.

"No, madam!" returned Woodvill, lowering his eyes; "I — I would not seem to ground upon that slight service, any hope — wish, I mean; (he spoke confusedly and at intervals,) the service was done myself — it is so precious to remember ——" He left off abruptly.

It was not possible for Eveleen to note the variations of Lord Woodvill's darkly

Digitized by Google

bright aspect, without some apprehension of the sort of wishes at which his words hinted. But she recollected that he had loved madly, and, as it proved, incautiously before; and, disregarding the plea of his boyhood then, she distrusted the stability of any sudden passion in such a bosom. How did she long for some spell to stay the current of betraying blood, which came in a strong tide over her ivory brow, and then left her whole face white as marble! Lord Woodvill was not presumptuous enough to interpret those striking changes, as most men would have done. His estimation of himself had been abidingly lowered by early mortification; he had looked on that varying cheek but as the interpreter of an engaging modesty; and found some difficulty in expressing, without offending it further, his regret for having written of the portrait he had seen abroad, in a tone of apparent levity.

Eveleen hurried over his apology, and her acceptance of it, with an apprehensiveness very unlike a court lady, adding,— "It draweth late, — and if my aunt were to interrupt us —— I know you cannot wish

Digitized by Google

to see her. You have to tell me of my dear friend's brother. Did his servant, whom I made bold to send you, find you out?"

"He did, madam, and is now on his way to his master."

At this intelligence Eveleen uttered an exclamation of joy; the shades of every minor feeling passed from her brow, leaving it bright with hopes and expectations distinct from any grounded upon self. The generous glow was not lost upon Woodvill, in whose breast admiration of character was rapidly carrying it over admiration of person. He warned her, that having much to tell, he must trespass long upon her patience, and respectfully adverted to his uneasiness at seeing her stand throughout their conversation.

Eveleen no longer hesitated to sit down upon one of the brocaded tabourets near the chimney piece; and partly disengaging herself from her walking mantle, as it fell back from her fair shoulder the hood drew the hair along with it, scattering it in lovely and most feminine profusion over her head, throat, and bosom. Thus transpa-

Digitized by Google

rently veiled, the youthful face, now pale and now blushing, and the youthful form palpitating upon the sight with strong emotion, now alternately revealed and shadowed by the flickerings of the fire, a sort of visionary charm was added to her beauty, which might well arrest the eye of a young man, in whom

" War thoughts had left their places vacant."

But Lord Woodvill gazed only a moment, vividly as he felt the force of beauty: he withdrew his eyes, in obedience to certain remembrances, which whispered that he might yet find more dangerous rivals than Arundell Trevanion; and leaning somewhat pensively against the carved work of the chimney, began as follows:—

" Immediately after receiving your first honoured commands, I set about the due enquiries; and did gather then, only as much as I stated in my letter, by a private hand. Some business of his Highness of Orange carried me into Spain, where I heard something which I will relate in a fitter place. Thence I went to Ireland,— and to a fellow-delinquent I may own —

Digitized by Google

(Woodvill's natural humour broke out here, in spite of the awe which an infant passion excites)—to learn, for myself, and certain other English gentlemen gravely interested in the enquiry, the truth of a report touching the illegal disbanding of his protestant regiments in that country, which we were loth to believe of his present majesty upon common fame. I could not, therefore, stir more in Mr. Trevanion's concerns, until it became my happy hap to encounter one I had often wished to know — your reverend uncle; whom, however, I guessed not at before his pronouncing of your name, and my instant recognition of the same countenance as that picture ——"

Eveleen interrupted the hesitating speaker by as embarrassed a confession of the mistake she had made about himself; owning that her thoughts being full of her friend's affairs, she was predisposed to fancy every strange event connected with them, and to attribute her undetected recollection of Woodvill's features, to the unknown person's resembling either Sir Fulk Trevanion or his daughter. As Lord Woodvill now stood, his speaking aspect, darkened and

Digitized by Google

stilled by self-upbraiding memory, bore some likeness to his former self: and the light of his eyes, teeth, and kindled cheek, withdrawn from that Spanish brown complexion, even a partial judgment must have allowed that the face was less fitted for the sculptor's imitation than for that of the painter, with whom the character of a head is of more value than the perfection of the lines.

Momentarily lost in this observation, Eveleen failed to express any interest in Lord Woodvill's after hazards; and somewhat wounded at this omission, he purposely passed them over, proceeding to later circumstances.

"No sooner did I regain and deliver up my ungovernable companion Maltravers to his mother's embrace, than I betook myself — conceiting what I too hastily did — in right earnest to fathom Mr. Trevanion's history; and having just earned a sort of right to question one likely to know, carried my enquiries direct to his Highness of Orange. He was pleased to tell me briefly what followeth: —

"Upon Mr. Trevanion's coming over after the Earl of Argyll, to challenge that

Digitized by Google

nobleman for satisfaction on the well-known matter of the page, he was given and did accept, in the presence of the prince, satisfaction to this amount. The earl solemnly pledged his word of honour, that the disguised lady was of unblemished virtue, of noble blood and lawful birth; that circumstances of a singular nature made it impossible for him to divulge her name, except at the moment of giving her in marriage; and that even then it might only be repeated before one or two witnesses, previously sworn to secresy. The earl, however, pledged himself for the clearance of the mystery, after a certain period of time.

"Thus much his highness assured me he knew had been written to Sir Fulk Trevanion: but the matter miscarried; and Lord Argyll's pledge was rejected by the knight, from Mr. Trevanion's over-hasty petition for leave to address the fair young gentlewoman about whom this stir was made. His highness referred me further to the venerable Widow Smythe, whose devotion of all her worldly goods to the advancement of what she deemed a sacred cause will be remembered in history so long as Argyll's name and martyrdom, may I call

Digitized by Google

it? are registered there. In her house at Amsterdam the earl privately lodged this fair creature; so privately, that few persons knew of her existence there, and fewer were admitted to her company. Mrs. Smythe received her upon Lord Argyll's word; and speaking of her only by the name he gave her of Camellia, did, upon my motives being fully disclosed to her, believe herself justified in telling me the whole of what she knew: and this as much in justice to Argyll's memory, as in the hope of being instrumental to the future happiness of her former endeared guest.

"At first scantily, and afterwards fully, her youthful charge confided thus much to her:—She owned herself to have been born in a Roman Catholic country, of parents dissimilar in their religion; that having lost them both, and fallen under the severe thraldom of kinsfolk authorized to use any means of converting her to their faith, she had sought protection for her conscience and person, from Argyll, in distant Scotland. Her escape having been effected by the humane connivance of a third person, she was sworn, for that friend's sake, to keep herself out of all possibility of being discovered and

Digitized by Google

brought back, until the time were passed at which she should become possessed, by the law of her father's testament, of the liberty of going whither she would. Thus tramelled, Camellia, then bearing another feigned name, entered the family of the earl, disguised, as she had travelled, in the garb of a boy; and, known only to him, was put about the lady his daughter. In this service she had a principal share in nursing Mr. Trevanion, when a serious accident threw him for some weeks upon the hospitality of Lord Argyll. To order every thing requisite for the cure and comfort of their suffering guest was the province of the noble young mistress of the mansion; but the more gracious and winning offices of waiting sweetly upon sick fancies, persuading to wearying restraints, beguiling hours of pain by a book, a lute, or a well-told legend, fell to the lot of Camellia, as her lady's agent. In hours of such lonely watching, it appears that Camellia became deeply interested in her patient; and he, believing his gentle attendant one of his own sex, sometimes rallied him upon his womanish softness of nature and bashfulness of look; sometimes marvelled openly at the justness of his thoughts,

Digitized by Google

and fondness for subjects of the highest import. To serious approvals like these, Mr. Trevanion added occasionally such counsel against the seductions of after-life, as stamped upon the yielding heart of the supposed youth, a strong impress of his own nobleness. It cannot be wondered at, therefore, that the young gentlewoman did not fear to trust herself then, and subsequently, when employed by Argyll's daughter for the earl's help, with him in private, without detriment to her character for modesty.

"The part she took in Argyll's escape is well known, as well as the accident, which, discovering her sex to a few persons on the coast, enabled party to affix disgrace, or at least suspicion, to all concerned in the mystery of her disguise. Mrs. Smythe informed me that she early discovered, through her inexperienced guest's details of Mr. Trevanion's illness, the powerful impression which his character had left upon her heart; and that she traced to it Camellia's extreme repugnance to match herself with the earl's second son, who, since he had seen her in woman's attire, was become passionately enamoured of her, and, though ignorant of her real condition, professed himself willing

Digitized by Google

to wed her upon faith of her own qualities, independent of trust in his father's testimony."

"The lady must have been very charming, then!" ejaculated Eveleen, for the first time interrupting a narration to which she was listening with intense interest.

"I do believe it, madam," returned Woodvill, "and can aver to the charms of her person; for the venerable widow trusted me with the sight of a miniature, which Mr. Trevanion had himself drawn from her for Lord Argyll, who sent it, ere his late bloody execution, to this most helpful friend. It certainly represents a most rare creature. Our Spenser or Shakspeare might have imagined such an one, as the fair spirit of some crystal stream, listening to its music, and pondering on its course: for the eyes are of a soft water-blue, with a sweet fixedness in them; and the extremely youthful face, shines out through absolute waves of glistening hair, that flow, as it were, even more profusely than the abundant tresses I now see, over the whole visible alabaster of the figure. The clear lustre of that face, only tinted by such hues as we find on sea-shells, may not be compared to the sun's

Digitized by Google

light, for that is too strong, nor to the moon's, for that is too pale; but for the slender yet exquisite form, seen faintly through the undulations of woman's loveliest veil, I did find a comparison — the water-lily, which ever shows fairest when the stream flows over it."

Lord Woodvill had evidently forgotten both himself and his professed subject, towards the conclusion of this brief rhapsody; a fault which may be forgiven to a young man of three-and-twenty, looking all the while upon a face and form, which those in question might rival but could not surpass. Miss Hungerford, however, did not discover that he meant any compliment to herself; for she was sitting with downcast eyes, and felt a sigh struggling from her breast as she silently noted his enthusiastic admiration of beauty; but she spoke not, and the speaker resumed.

"Ronald Campbell was, unhappily, a man of more passion than principle: he loved, as some do, ragefully; that is, he might be tempted to injure the creature he loved, to appease the resentment she might excite in him. Suspecting the reason of the lady's coldness, he privately

Digitized by Google

reproached her with a prepossession for another, whom she might never see again — Mr. Trevanion being then in England: and when the latter appeared at the Hague, he was the first to bring her intelligence of the errand upon which he was come. The state into which the poor young lady fell upon this, was most afflicting, her heart being assaulted by two of the cruellest griefs that can be endured — the certainty of being evil thought of by one too dearly valued, and the conviction that unless she broke a solemn promise she might not do herself justice. In a brief delirium, which followed successive swoonings, she made many pathetic appeals to Mr. Trevanion's memory of her conduct and conversation in their days of unwitnessed companionship; frequently calling upon Heaven to pardon him his injustice and ingratitude: indeed, so gentle was her nature, that when he was brought, by his own urgent requests, to express his grief for having been obliged by honour and filial duty to act as he had done, she accepted his apologies, with that mixture of virtuous dignity and sweet leniency which exalts gratitude into devotion. Upon this occasion Mr.

Digitized by Google

Trevanion was so affected by her sensibility and beauty, that he somewhat too romantically, I suppose *I* must say, determined then, to offer her the only reparation in his power, both for that affront, and for his being the innocent cause of certain light remarks made by lighter ladies, on the manner of their first acquaintance.

You know already that Sir Fulk Trevanion refused to take Lord Argyll's word for his mysterious companion's worthiness: upon which Mr. Trevanion would have submitted to wait out five years, during which time the lady's name was not to be revealed, had not the frantic jealousy of young Campbell threatened ruin to her, and great sorrow, for her sake, to his father. The earl had hitherto encouraged his son in his attempts to gain the lady's favour—a refutation in itself of the two adverse scandals bruited abroad concerning their relationship. But when he found her, not only indifferent to Mr. Campbell, but attached to another, who soon made no secret of his fixed purpose to wait for her hand, he used the tenderest arguments to dissuade his son from continuing his addresses. Campbell's resentment and disappointment

Digitized by Google

proved, however, too warm for the control of his better feelings; and the stir he made about Camellia attracting curiosity and conjecture to her singular situation, the earl was privately arranging to send her under charge of a worthy minister returning to a protestant part of France, for safer keeping, when an event occurred which precipitated Mr. Trevanion into the greatest fault, I do suppose, he has ever committed—marrying in direct opposition to the will of his father."

"A fault indeed! a great fault!" repeated Eveleen, in an accent of regret, "and sorely, justly has it been visited, I fear. Alas! how the best of us, fall short, even of our poor imaginings!" Her eyes swam in tears as she spoke, for herself and others; yet a sweet and sacred light broke through those tears, and rivetted the eyes of Woodvill. How his full glance replied!

Recovering himself with difficulty, he pursued his theme.

"Mrs. Smythe told me, that she was at supper with Lord Argyll and the affianced lovers, then about to be separated, when the Duke of Monmouth, who had only that day arrived from the Netherlands,

Digitized by Google

suddenly appeared from the statholder's house, with some tidings of moment; for which cause Mrs. Smythe withdrew, and after short absence was called in to witness the marriage of her fair guest with Mr. Trevanion: it was solemnized hastily by the protestant minister above mentioned, and in the presence of Lord Argyll, herself, and the duke."

Here a shiver of sad disappointment, or rather, of dread, lest one story, at least, was true against Mr. Trevanion, ran through the veins of Eveleen at this mention of Monmouth. Lord Woodvill's quick glance only, noticed the shiver, and he went on.

"Directly after the ceremony, hurried adieus were exchanged, and Mr. Trevanion with his bride fled that very night out of Holland. Much of what Mrs. Smythe related, subsequent to this flight, she obtained in different conversations with Lord Argyll; and where her knowledge failed, that Philips you so bravely assisted helped me to information.

"Mr. Trevanion refuged in the Cevennes, where he was said to enjoy security for his wife. From this asylum he wrote to his father, owning his offence, but

Digitized by Google

pleading the force of tenderness and compassion upon a man's heart, when the woman he loves is threatened with a danger from which he alone can save her. Yet as he was not free to explain the sort of peril from which their marriage drew her, it is not surprising that Sir Fulk Trevanion should at first adhere to his resolution of not receiving him again as a son, until he came, in open day, to prove his lady's honourable birth and fair reputation. Their habits and feelings, too, upon the great political matters then in discussion, being dissimilar, Mr. Trevanion felt, with sorrow, that he could not humble himself, as he would willingly have done, to his father; lest it might entangle him in submission to public men and measures, at which his principles revolted. He, therefore, refrained from obeying his heart's impulse of hastening into England, to crave his father's pardon on his knees; and, like some other absentees you may guess at, entertaining good hope of better times for our country, and abhorring all ways, except constitutional ones, for her glory and happiness, made up his mind to wait quietly where he was, until he should be wanted

Digitized by Google

by her, and have a situation of responsibility to fill in her councils.

"The accession of his present majesty did not open the door of return to one like Mr. Trevanion, who had taken so active a part in the bill for his exclusion; and more justly suspicious of a scheme for overturning our church than heretofore, he could not in conscience accept his father's sudden offer of reconciliation, upon the condition of his sharing in the coronation, where he must take a particular oath of allegiance to that very sovereign.

"For this sacrifice to public virtue, Philips informed me (finding how much I had learned previously), his master was rewarded, by a summons to meet the person by whose connivance his lady had escaped from her fanatic oppressors; for the purpose of being freed, before the appointed time, from their obligation to secrecy.

"Upon that occasion, this dangerous fellow, I call him so, because not sound enough to withstand a complication of temptations, was despatched with those memorable letters to Sir Fulk and Miss Trevanion."

Digitized by Google

"Oh, doubtless, they were momentous!" Eveleen exclaimed.

"Philips said," resumed Woodvill, "that they surely contained his master's assurance that he would shortly follow, with his wife and little son, to efface every scandal against them, and to crave his father's pardon for what he was still willing to call a self-willed marriage, but never a disgraceful one. For thus much Philips had heard his master and the Lady Camellia discoursing of. The orders with which he left France were, that he was either to return with, or transmit, Sir Fulk Trevanion's answer to a banker in Holland, through whose house all his letters to and from England had passed. No answer, however, was destined to be returned. The first news that met Philips, on landing in England, was Lord Argyll's attempt upon Scotland, which that nobleman had generously kept concealed from Mr. Trevanion, lest it should entirely ruin him, without materially benefiting their cause. Philips finding that, in consequence of this act, all who had formerly assisted that nobleman were become obnoxious to seizure, changed his course, and before he ventured to put himself into the power of

Digitized by Google

Sir Fulk Trevanion and his nephew, deemed it wisest to make the effort he did, for getting private speech at Miss Trevanion. The unfortunate end of that meeting so persuaded him of Miss Trevanion having been won over, by her prospect of marrying her cousin, to the party against his master, and the arbitrary aspect of the existing government being exactly that which would self-exile Mr. Trevanion during the present reign, he made directly for Monmouth's camp, in company with Lord Gray's amanuensis, with whom he fell in by chance, and knew abroad, and who let him into the secret of the duke's enterprise. Such an inflammable fellow was easily wrought into a flame of what he chose to call a patriot ardour, by a man like Gray de Wark, notoriously indifferent to the means by which he obtained a given end, and skilled in prompting others' passions. Grievous is it, that such champions of freedom force themselves into the ranks of honest ones, and struggle for the same sacred possession—to use it, oh, how differently!"

Woodvill uttered this with a vehemency of tone which had not, however, one angry element in it: it spoke but the aversion of

Digitized by Google

a lofty nature to any union with baseness or vileness; and Eveleen thought the momentary severity of that bright and bland aspect, increased its charm. Under all changes, what we love, is lovely! never more so, than when we can refer the beautifying variation to some moral cause.

Fearful of having erred in her conduct to Philips, she timidly enquired Lord Woodvill's full opinion of him.

"I certainly think," was the reply, "that a fouler act than he performed against his master, could not be perpetrated by a man's worst enemy. Philips has too much capacity, for the plea of simplicity to be urged in his excuse: yet I think he meant honestly,—more than that—serviceably to his master; and I believe him convinced now, that he ought not to pardon himself for having presumed to act unlawfully in his name. I admit that there was much to tempt him into what he did. Dazzled he was—for he sorrowfully admitted it to me—by the rank and consideration which were promised him in the future; and the instant offer of a gentleman's commission, which he accepted then. But he was sincere in fancying, that by acting for his absent master as

Digitized by Google

he would have acted himself, he was opening a door for the former to return in triumph over his enemies, and to brilliant employments under their expected liberator. Thus the wretched knave was set upon at once by our strongest assailants—ambition for ourselves, ambition for those we love; and the desire of revenge for unmerited wrongs. I can forgive the man, being penitent—but, not penitent, I fear me, honoured Eveleen, Woodvill would have been one most fatal to him on a jury."

"You are right, my lord!" was Eveleen's gentle answer, the emphatic breath melting away in a sigh of sweet mercy: "I am too apt to forget, that we should never consider a wicked act with diminished horror, from any reason. Pray go on; tell me, if you can, why Mr. Trevanion, if he be able to disprove the calumnies against him—and he must, this, of being in Monmouth's rebellion — why he has not appeared to substantiate his own letters?"

"I cannot determinately answer that question," returned Woodvill: "Philips conjectures that his master had been turned back by the very circumstance which first checked him — Lord Argyll's landing.

Digitized by Google

The arbitrary imprisonments and summary executions which have outraged our venerable institutions since then, and the glaring determination of a certain party to sacrifice, without law, all persons formidable to them, may well justify Mr. Trevanion, now a husband and a parent, in avoiding similar severities. We know not what explanations, proposals, and refusals may have passed between his father and himself in the way of letters; nor how much of such correspondence may have been seized upon by that very kinsman whose perfidy to poor Miss Trevanion you imparted to Philips. I am bold in praying to be made better acquainted with that business?"

It was now Eveleen's turn to narrate; and, aware of its necessity, she hastened to put Lord Woodvill in possession of every particular connected with Mr. Trevanion's affairs which she had collected. Such a summary of confidences and events, of course included a reference to what Lord Villiers might further elicit of Colonel Trevanion's share in Philips's betrayal; and the character of Lord Villiers not being yet publicly redeemed, she believed it due to herself to say how far he was misrepresented

Digitized by Google

by general report, and what good hope his well-wishers might now entertain of his hearty reformation. She spoke, too, of Prince Isidore d'Este, as one of whom she thought highly, and upon whom she could reckon for promoting their endeavours to obtain justice for Mr. Trevanion, supposing they could not, by any ordinary channel, move the king for that purpose. The interest she displayed in the one of these characters, and the honourable testimony she bore to the high merits of the other, again threw Lord Woodvill's heart and aspect into shadow; and he marvelled how he could for a moment indulge the sweet day-dream, into which he was fast falling, whilst looking at and listening to her.

The theme Eveleen was on, was full of generous emotion; and although she began it timidly, her looks gradually became more disengaged, her manner more earnest, and she soon lost every thought of self, in a thousand tender or benevolent sympathies. Lord Woodvill, too, became absorbed in the same sentiments; only interrupting her at times, by indignant exclamations at the deep dissimulation of Dunbar Trevanion, and pitiful ones at the fatal weaknesses of

Digitized by Google

of Sir Fulk. Eveleen meant not to be her own panegyrist, but she could not state barely the share she had in comforting and counselling her friend Aura, without painting unconsciously her own excellences; and the fated Woodvill felt that he was fated.

After Miss Hungerford's details were exhausted, the great point to be settled in this interview, was the separate parts to be taken by the two confiding persons, in furthering Miss Trevanion's wishes for her brother.

The first step, Lord Woodvill suggested, ought to be to strive at unmasking Colonel Trevanion to his uncle; for the twofold reason of delivering Miss Trevanion from the farce of his addresses, and wresting the heirship from his grasp ere it were too late. The next step must be application to the king, for Mr. Trevanion's friends, in his behalf, to lay such proofs before him of the latter's absence from the two rebellions, as must at once remove the sentence of outlawry; and if that were obtained, and the fact proved, Mr. Trevanion's friends might fairly ask, as an indemnity for the wrong done him, oblivion of his small share

Digitized by Google

in Argyll's escape. "The door would then be open for his return unmolested," continued Woodvill; "and it would rest with himself to make out his case, with his father, upon the grievance of his marriage: and of that I entertain good hope, from what I briefly alluded to at the commencement of my long discourse this evening." Again Eveleen was all ear.

Woodvill resumed: — "Just as I was leaving Spain, when I went thither for his highness, I heard a story there, which, at the time, struck me as having close connection with our friends. The Spanish officer that told it me, had it only from another, so he failed in giving me complete satisfaction. The history went, that one of a great family in Catalonia had formerly married a protestant lady, with permission for her to exercise her own religion privately, and to breed up her daughter in the same. Their only son was, of course, educated in that of his father. The lady died; and her son shortly after following her, the widowed husband's attention was then turned upon his surviving child. Upon this young creature of fourteen his great estates were to descend. He found

Digitized by Google

her deeply rooted in the faith of her mother: a matter of rare occurrence in one so young, therefore the more admirable. She persisted, it is said, with heroic constancy, in yielding due obedience to her father's natural anxiety, that she should listen to the most learned and devout professors of his church, in the hope of her conversion. She read whatever books he gave her for this purpose; conforming in all things to his will, except in being present at mass. Great as must thus have been the trial, fearful as must sometimes have been the bewilderment of one whose very youth incapacitated her from refuting other men's arguments by words, yet was she strong, evidently, in the great argument of the heart; and rich in that grace which fortified our Ridleys and Latimers at the stake: she endured the trial, and won the glory." Lord Woodvill uttered the last words with an emotion which brought the witnesses of it into his eyes! Eveleen did not speak, but her generous tears flowed visibly. After a moment's pause, he resumed:—

"This truly Christian maid, for so I may call her, be she or be she not, the sweet

Digitized by Google

saint whose picture I have such pleased memory of, was not, it seemed, harshly used by her father, although his anxiety for her salvation, as he believed it, increased with the difficulty of converting her. He gave strong proof of his tenderness for her, and his persuasion that there was no safety for a soul out of his church, by the testament he left: he died just as she had attained her sixteenth year, bequeathing her all his wealth; but with this additional ordinance, that she must either openly abjure her errors of faith, and so be free to live under the roof of her guardian, a near kinsman; or consent to abide in the convent of Santa Benedicta, until she either chose a husband of her father's religion, or reached the age of twenty. If, however, she were minded, before that, to devote herself to Heaven as a nun, she was authorized to bestow the half of her estates upon the convent. If she remained unconverted, a certain dowry was to be given her by Don Juan Silveira, her kinsman, with freedom to go whither she would, and he was to enjoy all the remainder.

"In conformity with this will, the orphan, whom I think they called Donna

Digitized by Google

Anna, did reside at Santa Benedicta, and for some time was lulled and won upon by the real kindness of some, and the affected fondness of others. No art was left untried to gain her as a convert. When these failed, harsher measures were resorted to; and, finally, her young heart was appalled by the threatened rigours of the inquisition. Still unbroken, however, in her adherence to the pure faith, she succeeded in moving her guardian to pity, and he helped her out of the country. At the time, her escape was attributed to an aged scholar, a native of France, who had been her tutor in his own language even after her mother's death, and was dismissed at last from his being suspected of leaning to the side of protestanism. Don Juan Silveira was never suspected of aiding the heretic, although he fell into immediate possession of her property, and became embroiled with the abbess of Santa Benedicta, who endeavoured to set up a plea for receiving part of the fugitive orphan's wealth, as an indemnity for his carelessness in guarding Donna Anna; that young lady having eloped when passing her name's-day at his house. By the influence of this

Digitized by Google

abbess, the Spanish court were induced to take such an interest in the fugitive's recovery, that I do believe it was some order from Madrid, in too close alliance with the States General to be resisted by them, which hurried Mr. Trevanion into the marriage, that of course enabled him to protect her against future seizure.

"The secret part of this story only became public by the free confession of Don Juan Silveira himself, whom a great domestic calamity had at once divorced from worldly objects, and brought to embrace the cowl and the scourge. It was then known that he had been the contriver of Donna Anna's flight under her tutor's care; and that he had provided against the probable recovery of the fugitive, and her certain condemnation then to the prison of Santa Benedicta, with, perhaps, the forfeiture of all her property to its funds, by engaging her to exactly such concealment of her name and country as was observed by her whom they called Camellia. The periods too, agree so entirely: for when I heard the story, then just circulating, it must have been at the time Mr. Trevanion was invited to meet his lady's relative."

Digitized by Google

"Oh! should this prove the case," exclaimed Eveleen, in a sweet passion of joyful tenderness, "dear — dear Aura! how happy mayest thou be at last!"

A blush at her own vehemence suspended what she would have added.

Lord Woodvill hastened to say, "that after obtaining from Mrs. Smythe the history he had previously repeated this evening, his memory of the Catalonian romance was revived by the striking coincidence of the stories. The venerable Scottish widow confirmed his notion, by saying that Argyll had a sister married on the continent: she had never known where; as the match having displeased her severely-principled father, being with a Romanist, her name was sparingly mentioned, so that the very existence of the lady Annice was forgotten by the ordinary world. Mrs. Smythe owned," he continued, "that she always suspected the relationship of Argyll and her young charge, whose fair beauty was entirely that of a Campbell, and bore witness that at least one of her parents could not have inherited a dark complexion." Woodvill then added, "that after his two most fortunate rencontres with Miss Hungerford,

Digitized by Google

he would have gone purposely into Spain again, to have gained satisfaction on this important point, had not the dying summons of Lord Hungerford, peremptorily obliged him to abandon the idea. And at present, he concluded, "I fancy myself as much obliged to be here, for the purpose of protesting against the threatened measure of degrading poor Lady Hungerford; if that is to be grounded upon the plea of Hungerford's reason being disordered, when he married her. I did, however, visit Mrs. Smythe on my way, and grieve to say, she had no tidings of Mr. Trevanion later in date than his letters by Philips. She doubts, however, that some communication from him must have miscarried, and looks daily to see himself and noble lady on their way to justification and welcome in England."

"But Argyll's niece!" ejaculated Eveleen, the rosy flush fading from her cheek.

"I fear Sir Fulk Trevanion would scarcely rejoice in her substitution for a daughter of Lady Harriet Wentworth!" Lord Woodvill cheeringly added, "I mistake him, too, if he be not by this time convinced that the brave Argyll perished in

Digitized by Google

an attempt to save, not in one to ruin, our civil and religious liberties. What I saw with mine own eyes in Ireland, and which is now notorious to all men, must have shown him what was intended by the removal of the virtuous Ormond from the vice-royalty. Talbot avowedly weeded the Irish army of every protestant: officers as well as men were thrust out without even a plausible pretext, to the number of five or six thousand; yea, though all the substance of most of the officers had been spent in the purchase of their commissions."

Interrupting himself, the ardent Woodvill returned to his main subject, assuring his fair hearer, "that he had secured the evidence of Philips's confession, given before a Flemish authority; he had gotten also the testimonial of young Maltravers in the same legal form; and expected to receive from that adventurous youth, who had volunteered the service and gone into Spain, a confirmation of his hope about Donna Anna Silveira, with, most likely, testimonies also to Mr. Trevanion's presence in Catalonia, when he was reported to be in Monmouth's camp at home." He

Digitized by Google

further said, "that he had already secured the co-operation of one or two friends of true honour, who might, therefore, well be styled the friends of Mr. Trevanion, in the work of bringing such facts before the king and the knight as neither might resist. That he meant finally to intrust the law management of the cause, to one whom, he verily believed, was born to rank amongst those illustrious spirits of past and present times, who may be called the *Dii penates* of Englishmen."

In this prediction Lord Woodvill uttered sure prophecy, for he spoke of that wise and upright statesman who framed our Bill of Rights: and if in that bill, Somers laid not an ever-during corner stone of the glorious constitution then reared, the destroying quality must be sought for in the soil whereon it rests, not in the quarry whence it was hewn.

This mention of his godfather drew Woodvill into saying, that he had long referred himself by letter whilst abroad, in all straits, to the experienced counsel of this enlightened friend; and that having now served an apprenticeship in war and politics, under one of the greatest warriors and

Digitized by Google

soundest statesmen of the age, with what benefit it must be his future care to show, he was come, by Mr. Somers's advice, to fill his place amongst those whose birthright office it was, to serve their country and protect her liberties. He came, therefore, too sadly sure, that so long as the present reign lasted, he must continue to do that which would keep him a placeless, and wellnigh pennyless lord."

Woodvill sighed in his heart, though his lips smiled, as he uttered the last sentence; thinking how much further conscious poverty ought to drive all wishes about marriage and Eveleen Hungerford from his mind:—and so ended his protest.

Where, meanwhile, was the sweet ardour of Eveleen—her frank and full enthusiasm, in all that transports a generous heart beyond itself! Listening to such sentiments from any other man, her bright aspect would have reflected the vivid expressions of the speaker's; she would have ejaculated, interrogated, blessed! Now she sat striving against being too deeply interested; fearful lest look or word of hers might hint to the susceptible, and perhaps variable Wood-

Digitized by Google

vill, what was struggling for the mastery over her.

To say, therefore, what she did not mean to say; to leave unsaid what she ought to have said; to appear repressingly cold, when some little warmth of feeling towards the preserver of her uncle would neither have appeared extraordinary nor unmaidenly, were the sure testimonies of an inward fire, which would fain smother itself. One degree less of equally excited interest on Woodvill's part, would have left him sufficient discernment for guessing at the truth: as it was, he concluded that he was to receive the sudden chill of her manner, and her total silence upon whatever concerned himself singly, as a hint that he might never attempt to renew a tie which his own hand had broken; and fearing some imprudent display of his feelings, he said abruptly, that having yet to visit the parents of Lady Hungerford, and to learn whether he should find Sir Fulk Trevanion at Treverderet, or must seek him in London, he would not longer trespass upon Miss Hungerford's time.

At this simple expression of politeness Eveleen started up, all blushes and appre-

Digitized by Google

hension, lest it were a reminder of what she ought first to have thought of. She hurried out thanks and acquiescence, when he respectfully proposed transmitting her the details of fresh occurrences, through the medium of bishop Lake; and as he took her hand to lead her to the door, articulated, not very distinctly, a repetition of her gratitude for his preservation of one of her mother's bracelets. Woodvill's eyes were rivetted upon the surpassing beauty of that small white hand, as he received it within his. But one eye-flash of admiration proclaimed the feeling; and though Eveleen's cheek long retained the deep crimson with which his glance had covered it, she saw not the more thrilling expression that succeeded. Woodvill's foregone impressions were all thrown into disorder, by finding that he held a trembling hand: he knew not then how he had held, and how released it, when he recovered from the momentary bewilderment, and saw himself alone. She was gone—that fair creature! to find a thousand bright visions waiting upon his image; he, to pass out of the great gates, mount his horse, and ride slowly away, in a trance of doubt, asking himself whether Eveleen Hungerford were

Digitized by Google

not, unconsciously, too profoundly interested in Lord Villiers's reformation; or taken by the more flattering attentions of the Prince d'Este? Whether, in fact, she were yet to be won? and, if so, whether it were either wise or generous in him, poor as he was in all save family honour, to think of entering the lists for her favour?

Early the next day, in a cathedral-like world of glittering icicles Eveleen Hungerford stepped, with a shrinking motion, into the heavy travelling carriage, wherein her aunt was already seated, all sable in garb and countenance.

Lady Rhoda had, not long before, received from her niece's own lips the brief information that Lord Woodvill had been to pay his respects to her on the preceding evening; and her fierce storm of consequent wrath, was settled down into looks of sullen aversion. She sat determinately silent; occupied solely by the preservation of that treasure-casket of notable memory, which ever seemed the first object of her cares.

There were tears on Eveleen's cheek, as they passed the village church-yard which naturally excited ideas of one more distant;

Digitized by Google

and when they drove close to the orchard of the farm-house where little Villiers was at nurse. No moisture was in the eyes of Lady Rhoda; yet she fetched several convulsed sighs, seemingly as much in anger as in sorrow; and Eveleen marvelled at the implacable resolution with which a bereaved mother could pass the abode of her lost daughter's child, without giving him her blessing, simply because his father had earned her great displeasure.

Believing it right to divert her own thoughts from this sad subject, she looked towards Treverderet, now with sweetened emotion; and tried, after that, to think only that she was going to pass the sacred and joyful season of Christmas under the roof of her most Christian uncle. But she found that dear vision no longer a spell upon her heart. The events of the past evening continually presented themselves: delightful imaginations, thrilling recollections, inviting presentiments, floated in along with them upon her tranced soul: and that happiness, which, but a few short weeks before, seemed to her stricken mind banished even from hope's region, she now timidly anticipated for herself, and for the friend dearest to her.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VII.

LORD WOODVILL did not find its master at Treverderet. Sir Fulk had quitted it a whole week, with his nephew and daughter, ere the latter's letter to Miss Hungerford could be delivered by old Walter. He was told that the party were at the house of a friend in an inland county. Thither he posted: again he was baffled: they were gone thence; and a whole fortnight was thus wasted ere he got sure account of their being arrived in London. There, then, he followed on the instant; and easily discovering the temporary residence of Sir Fulk Trevanion, lost no time in waiting upon him. Yet he guessed not how precious every moment now was to those who wished success to Mr. Trevanion's cause. James Stuart himself had stooped to recommend a wife for the newly-chosen heir of Treverderet: and the young lady being the third daughter of an ancient house, brought up under a discreet mother, Sir Fulk Trevanion saw no reason to object,

Digitized by Google

especially as his nephew confessed, when closely questioned, that he had often admired Lady Eleanor, since his fair cousin's coldness had set his affections free.

Sir Fulk was permitted to understand that the consent of the lady's father, the Marquis of ——, was given more cordially from the king's gracious assurance that he meant to revise the matter of the Chascawen barony, so soon as certain legal formalities assured him it would not descend to one who had raised his hand against his government. Impelled forward by such a lure, the knight was now making all speed to the ruinous goal prepared for him: and at the time Woodvill pursued him into Staffordshire, he was giving the meeting to the Marquis of ——'s family, that he might approve the lady recommended: he did approve of her; and now, although the actual nuptials of the courtly pair were, for the sake of propriety and preparations, removed to a somewhat distant day, excuses had been found for urging on the draft of settlements, which the contracting parties agreed to sign in that brief shape; by which means, it was said, the minds of the lovers would be set at rest, and the two families, thus solemnly

Digitized by Google

united, might together prosecute the great business of regaining the long-ravished title.

Unsuspicious of the rapidity with which those matters were carrying on, Lord Woodvill presented himself at Sir Fulk Trevanion's door, where he was told the knight kept his chamber, from indisposition; but that Colonel Trevanion was in the house. Woodvill was declining admission to that gentleman, when he appeared at a door opening upon the entrance-hall, and courteously invited the distinguished-looking stranger in. The latter hesitated an instant, then bowed and followed. Only Mr. Becket was seated in the large morning-room, writing at a far window. He merely bent his head at a visitor's appearance, and resumed his task.

Colonel Trevanion, with his best grace, and in something of that free tone with which one young man feels privileged in addressing another, now enquired the name and business of their guest, proffering his services in carrying any message to his uncle. Woodvill paused to consider, ere he replied — "The Lord Woodvill, sir; and my business, perhaps, had best be told only to the honoured knight himself."

Digitized by Google

"I crave pardon, my lord!" returned Dunbar, more ceremoniously, apprehending now who he had to deal with; having often heard rumours of Eveleen Hungerford's engagement with this nobleman. "But since mine uncle hath undertaken business of his majesty's, he hath transferred the weight of his own, to me. Upon what subject, then, am I to have the honour of attending to your lordship?"

Woodvill's eye now took deliberate aim at the villain; and, with an expression foreign to his words, as he answered — "A subject, sir, which, I would fain hope, you will be right glad to promote the fair discussion of, even to the disappointment of certain permitted expectations of yours. My errand is, in my own person, and as the mouth-piece of other true Englishmen, to speak in Mr. Trevanion's just defence to his father."

Colonel Trevanion was now prepared to keep the muscles of his face from working; he answered composedly, yet crouchingly, "You know not, then, my lord, the character you would handle: my noble kinsman brooks not interference with his private concerns. He hath expressed so much dis-

Digitized by Google

pleasure of late, from officious but well-meant kindness, that I grieve to say he hath come to the resolution of never hearkening again to any one who would bring up the name of my unhappy cousin."

"Mean you to imply," enquired Woodvill, severely, "that Sir Fulk Trevanion would not rejoice to have his son's honour cleared?"

"Can you do this, my lord?" Dunbar in his turn questioned, making a powerful effort to conceal his alarm.

Lord Woodvill paused, as if to recollect himself; then said, with openness, "Yes, sir; I can bring witnesses to prove that Mr. Trevanion was not in Monmouth's rebellion, nor in any way an abettor of it. I can produce the man who abused his name on that occasion: and, ere long, I shall be able triumphantly to refute the assassin-like scandal, of his lady having been the offspring of guilty love. You may chance to know, sir, that all this is possible to an honest seeker after the truth of both matters."

"I pretend not to know so much," replied Dunbar, with great quietness of tone and aspect, though his flesh quivered inly with suppressed passion. "Mine honoured

Digitized by Google

uncle hath so peremptorily commanded me to silence upon this afflicting theme, that I dared not for my life molest him, even in times past, by over curious questioning. For mine own great satisfaction, however, I would humbly desire to learn your lordship's grounds for impugning the wisdom and justice of his majesty's government, that I may judge——"

"I crave your pardon, sir!" was Woodvill's interruption; "one who might chance to appear amongst the accused, may not be accepted into the jury."

"I do not take your meaning, my lord," Dunbar rejoined, with a cheek that proved how well he understood him; "but this I know, that it is my duty and privilege, honoured as I am by my dear uncle's favour, (here he directed a conciliatory glance to Becket, who sat at gaze upon the speakers,) to stand between his age and future assaults of grief and vexation. There hath of late been much intermeddling and contriving, by persons at whose motives I should be at a loss to guess, did I not know that a certain party in politics think no instruments too mean for their purpose. Thus, women, lackeys, and boys have been brought

Digitized by Google

to act on this scene of pestilent intrigue." He stopped, directed a keen look upon the countenance before him, which, from indifference to personal danger, remained unaltered in its colour. Dunbar, however, felt that he was upon a right scent, and he sought to urge out some self-condemning word from the man who, for the first time, he began to conjecture, might be the fugitive mentioned by Miss Hungerford. "We have already heard," he continued, affecting heat of temper, "of flying rebels, quite willing to repay the service of being helped away, by testifying to aught that pleased their helper. I am one, my lord, that may take Heaven to witness how heartily I did once desire and strive for my cousin's clearance; and I take it ill, that any man should suppose I have not been forward to remove a family stain. The matter of my cousin's tie with Monmouth — his double tie — it blisters my tongue to speak of it — touches our honour too nearly, for any honest man in his senses to doubt of our having sifted it to the bottom. You have chafed me, Lord Woodvill: and you must give me leave to tell you, that neither mine uncle nor myself will suffer ourselves to be made

Digitized by Google

balls for every fool's racket. This seems uncivil, but ——"

"No apology, sir!" Woodvill interrupted, with ready presence of mind; "all things are forgiven to a losing player."

"A losing player!" burst perforce from the white lips of Colonel Trevanion, who was the easier transported out of himself at this period, when he had believed his game was in his hand. For an instant he measured Lord Woodvill with an unrestrained glance from head to foot, then quelling the rising passion, said, with biting contemptuousness,—"If any of the confederacy, that are leagued for the readmission of discontented spirits into our country, have had to seek their witnesses in the camp of the late duke, or in the hiding-holes of his men after Sedgemoor, I would advise them not to tempt a scrutiny into their conduct on such occasion: it may prove dangerous."

"Doubtless it would in these times!" returned Woodvill; "but there are other ways of putting honour and life in jeopardy; so, I say, look to yourself, Colonel Trevavion; beware how you profess one faith and privately cabal with the worst of another! and beware how you abuse the con-

Digitized by Google

fidence of a woman of virtue by exposing her to insults."

"What mean you, sir!" Dunbar interrupted, and his kindling brow, wholly unlike his wont, gave token of fires lighting up within. "This gentleman, here, knoweth that there are persons leagued to force Sir Fulk Trevanion into disloyalty and intolerance; who believe their surest course will be to destroy his most faithful servant and kinsman. I would not do a nobleman such dishonour as to suspect him of any collusion with such trash. If you have aught wherewith to tax me, out with it boldly, and I will disprove a base charge at my sword's point."

"Your sword hath been too fiercely exercised of late, for mine to deal with it!" returned Woodvill, after momentary biting of his lip, to restrain the passionate indignation with which he had heard Eveleen Hungerford alluded to; and he looked abhorringly on Colonel Trevanion's weapon, which had, indeed, made merciless havoc amongst Monmouth's deluded followers.

"Ha!" Dunbar exclaimed, intemperately, hoping he was matched with a dastard: "do you refuse, then, my lord, to

Digitized by Google

maintain your insinuations against my character?"

"So far from it, sir," returned Lord Woodvill, with a tranquillity that savoured of haughtiness, "that I will now repeat them more distinctly: — Know you the man, that, trusted by an unfriended young kinswoman, with the reading of a most important letter, did affect to destroy it, yet betrayed it to her enemies? Know you the man, also, who was closetted for two hours with a certain confessor, on a day ——"

"No more, sir, no more!" exclaimed Dunbar, fiercely, no longer restraining his rage, nor requiring to affect indignation: "I am not here to listen to dark sayings. You are unable to prove your wanton assertions by facts, and you fear to do so with the rapier."

At this open insult Lord Woodvill's face blazed up; and but for an instant blazed: then removing his hand, which at the moment grasped the hilt of his sword, he said, calmly, "It neither sorts with my humour nor my principles, to accept any man's challenge upon a private quarrel: pike and bullet have written their acquittal of such devilish service, here, too oft and too

Digitized by Google

openly, for me to fear taunting from Colonel Trevanion; I will not draw upon him."

"Mr. Becket!" exclaimed Dunbar to the amazed and distressed secretary, who was now standing near them, "you are witness that this person — for gentleman I will not call him — refuseth me satisfaction; report this truly to my uncle, and he will know what credit should be given to such a testimony against the kinsman who you see is ready to pour forth his life's blood for his honour's sake! — Were it not for reverence of the roof we are under," he added, glaring round his eyes with the fierce movement of a tiger impatient to spring upon its prey, and addressing Lord Woodvill, "I would force satisfaction from you!"

"And were it not for the same due reverence," returned Lord Woodvill, his looks more disordered than before, "this naked hand should silence you. Have a care, then, how you repeat that menace; for out of this house,—by the eternal heavens! though it be in the king's presence, I will level you with the earth!"

"I shall take care to give you full provocation, be sure of it," was Dunbar's de-

Digitized by Google

risive answer, for he sought to provoke the young soldier into some offensive act: then, after an instant's pause, — "in the mean time, I now insist, that you come hither again — not on the morrow, for mine uncle hath business, but on the next, or next day — to unsay, or say at large, what you darkly charge me with."

"I thought, sir," ejaculated Lord Woodvill, scornfully, "that Sir Fulk would not bear mention of his son's affairs; and if I must speak plainly of your ——"

Colonel Trevanion interrupted him. — "Since it is now *my* honour and conduct that are grossly maligned, I am resolved not to leave my posture at my uncle's feet, until he has granted me the boon of hearing all you have to urge against me; and to enable me to clear myself to his honoured contentment. That done, my Lord Woodvill, you *must* and *shall* reckon with me at the sword's point."

"*Must!* and *shall*, sir!" reiterated Woodvill, his dark eye blazing over him, with the scathing effect of lightning. — Then controlling, and recovering himself with a right noble grace, he added, gently, "I do admit the accused person's privi-

Digitized by Google

lege : you *may* insist upon my appearance. I will be here, then, on the first day you name, at the hour of noon; and if I prove you not a false kinsman, this peaceable gentleman here shall have to quote me for a coward and a liar." He quitted the room as he spoke, slowly passing the hall to the door; and passing, as he did so, Frank Hollis, who moved aside in respect to the evidently noble stranger. Colonel Trevanion was just retreating from the entrance of the room, whither he had gone to look after his visitor, when Hollis went by, and the latter distinctly heard him utter, though with inward breath, his favourite saying, of "Forewarned, forearmed! my Lord Woodvill." It was ever the growl of the beast, with him, threatening destruction to some object within his grasp. He now returned to the upper end of the parlour, exclaiming, "The madman is gone at last!" Then, addressing the scarcely-composed secretary, as he was endeavouring to nib a pen, "Mr. Becket, in spite of your coldness to me, I reckon, confidently, upon your faithful representation of what has just passed. I know you for a man of discernment: you must see the drift of

Digitized by Google

this. My equal regard for good men of all persuasions, and my loyal services against the ribald followers of the protestant duke, as folk pleased to call him, have made me the mark for the two different sets — presbyterians and episcopalians; so that they confederate to dispossess me of the influential station in prospect for me here. If these crafty persons should succeed in their aim, of making me even suspected by mine honoured uncle, he would fall in at once with the high-church party, and the whole Trevanion interest in Cornwall would be brought to bear against the conscientious measures of our king, and his tender care for the preservation of his Roman catholic subjects. Do you not see this, most worthy Becket?"

"I pretend not to see aught that it lieth not in my duty to take note of," returned the cautious and somewhat perturbed secretary.

"But you could not fail to hear the conversation between me and that braving lord?" observed Dunbar, with his most winning accent; "and you know it is every man's duty to speak the truth (his own words did not choke him here). All I

Digitized by Google

crave at your kindness, nay, ask it as a right, is, that you will, if questioned, simply testify to the fact, that this Woodvill behaved like a caitiff, conscious of saying that which he dared not maintain at hazard of his life. That the fellow hath been noted for gallantry in the Spanish war, proves the clearer, that a bad cause turned him into a dastard. You will testify to what I ask of you, Mr. Becket, or you are no true son of your zealous church."

Becket was now sorely pressed, rather by fear of injury from some members of that church, than from an over-ardour in her cause: he wanted only peace for himself; his old habits in a place long familiar to him; and uncertain whether complete inaction for Colonel Trevanion, or the reasonable service he required, were the most likely to shield him from the evil of change, he replied, rather quickly, "that, of course, he must say the young lord deported himself uncivilly, and refused to take the colonel's challenge."

Some words of guarded acknowledgment, and a friendly shake by the hand, were Dunbar's answer. He then retired, to revolve alone how much of what had passed

Digitized by Google

he should find his account in repeating to his uncle, after his own fashion, now that Becket's evidence was secured; and how he should, after that, obtain the knight's consent to admit Lord Woodvill on that given day whereon this dissembler meditated a scheme for defeating his noble adversary.

Colonel Trevanion's brow was now smoothed, but all below the surface was in commotion: he saw that a mine was about to be sprung, not like that which his cousin and her friend had lately failed in rendering effective, but one planned by able heads, and likely to be fired by experienced hands. Time, however, there was, to stop its explosion. Before he sought his uncle, he wrote an urgent letter to his director in the subtle game he was playing (which became far more complicated than either had anticipated). Then calling up a trusted servant, ordered him to ride with it, without once drawing bridle, to Windsor, where the court was, and there deliver it to Lady Dorchester's fair gentlewoman.

The servant, become as good a dissembler as the master, received the packet with his usual appearance of cheerful alacrity, answering with that tone of bold familiarity with

Digitized by Google

which servants will ever address those to whose base propensities they believe themselves the ministers, and pledging himself for the immediate, safe and secret delivery of the letter to fair mistress Jane; then bowing himself out, mounted up a story higher to Frank Hollis's chamber, where he knew the latter was just gone to change soiled boots, in good hope of being in time to spare his friend that trouble.

Hollis, meanwhile, instead of remembering that any part of his apparel needed removal, was revolving the meaning of the words he had overheard; piecing his lame imaginations out, by memory of what he had drawn from the timid mistress of his affections, at their stolen parting in the woods at Treverderet.

In the grief and distraction of that interview, Damaris, feeling, as all women do, when parting from the man they love, that she was losing her protector in her lover, fell into such a passion of fear and sorrow, that she betrayed the secret of Lord Gray's papers; at once showing Hollis what iniquity was practising against the son of his master, and the impossibility of his getting Sir Fulk Trevanion to believe it upon Damaris Flavel's unsupported testimony.

Digitized by Google

The young man's good sense, however, furnished him with arguments to relieve his trembling mistress's dread of being dragged up to a fearful trial. He showed her that it was Colonel Trevanion's interest not to denounce her, as he had destroyed papers which he said were treasonable, and if so, ought to have been carried by him to government. Half convinced, and wholly cheered by her lover's logic, Damaris was left to wait and wish for his return; whilst he went, with the fixed purpose of losing no opportunity of watching, and, if possible, detecting the supposed enemy of his own happiness, as well as the destroyer of Mr. Trevanion's.

That more mischief was brewing now, by this polished hypocrite, Hollis guessed, from his muttered exclamation: he dreaded that it must have reference to the Trevanion interests, from the ruffled aspect of the stranger in the hall, whose name he learned so accidentally, but which he recollected Damaris had often mentioned as belonging to one "spoken of for her lady."

Whilst puzzling over these things, little could he hope that a friend to help him in getting light thereon, was coming in the

Digitized by Google

person of that agreeable, yet worthless fellow, in whose company he had been sent up to town. How grieved would Sir Fulk Trevanion have been, had he known then, the companion and ordeal to which he was exposing a rightly inclined young man!

It may be feared that poor Frank did not escape quite unscathed from the fire into which he was thrust: but, at all events, it left such a painful sense of its perniciousness upon his mind, that, never suspecting this pleasant profligate of being one in a deliberate plan for his moral ruin, he kept in with Mansell, in the kindly hope of persuading him to a better course.

Mansell, indeed, had that utter indifference to morals and character, which enables a person to practise the virtue of candour at a cheap rate; so that, ever pleading the force of bad habits, ever admitting his lapses, and ever repeating them, he went on cheating poor Hollis out of some hearty good counsel, more time, and far more money than he could afterwards pinch from his own wants.

Upon the present occasion, the confident Mansell came to impart a great distress to his excellent friend. He briefly

Digitized by Google

described the commission he had just received, adding that it would most likely prove the ruin of his fortune; for he was that very evening engaged to meet the only daughter of a wealthy goldsmith, for whose sake he was content to affront the petrific visage of sober wedlock, and that if he failed in this meeting, too probably it would end both his hope of her and his notion of reformation.

"Now the kindness I would ask of you, Master Hollis," he concluded, "is to manage to take this letter for me to Windsor. I'll be sworn it's nothing worse than my master's good-bye to my Lady Dorchester; for I tell you it is not my lady's waiting woman, though her name's on the letter. But if it was an assignation, why, you that are half a puritan, and be hanged to you, ought to think you are doing virtue a service, when you keep my notable resolution of beginning life after a new pattern, from being kicked to the dogs for a jade in diamonds."

At this address, Hollis's good or evil genius suggested, that if something darker than an amour with a woman already disreputable, were carrying on through her agency, the secret might be found in this packet to

Digitized by Google

the king's mistress. Hollis instantly determined to accept the commission; but so guarded was he in his manner of embracing it, so ably did he agitate Mansell's fears, and inflame his impatience lest they should be summoned away, and so interrupted, that he finally received the hurried trust, without giving, or being pressed to give, any determinate promise of fidelity.

Mansell, indeed, knew not the importance of the packet he was intrusting to another: Colonel Trevanion was too jealous of his own authority to repose such a matter in the breast of a hireling. As he managed it, the deep intrigues of sordid selfishness were wholly concealed under the cloak of, what was then slightly termed, an affair of gallantry. He always stood prepared, therefore, in case of his servant's being tracked to and fro to Lady Dorchester's, to confess such a correspondence with her; sure that her allurements would excuse him to the ordinary class of men, and her situation with the monarch, account for his extreme caution. Suffering his servant to understand this, he ensured his adroit performance of a task which, falling in with the graceless's own habits,

Digitized by Google

and, as he supposed, exalting him into his master's confidence, gave him two strong motives for keeping their secret from the severely moral Sir Fulk.

But there was one danger in this half-confidence, inseparable from all such, which even the wary Dunbar overlooked. Believing he knew the whole of the secret, and calculating that at the worst the effects of a discovery would only be his master's temporary disgrace with his uncle, Mansell presumed to weigh against that small damage, the certain failure, to him, of a scheme which promised a brilliant settlement for his life; and deciding that he was, therefore, justified in acting against the letter of his master's instructions, felt assured that the spirit of them would be as truly obeyed by one quick courier as another.

A plausible excuse for Hollis's absence was easily arranged; and matters so contrived by Mansell, that, without being seen to do it, he and Hollis slipped out at the same time; and meeting afterwards at the outskirts of the town, Mansell dismounted from his horse, Hollis got up, and whilst the former went to amuse himself till the hour of his assignation at a low gambling-

Digitized by Google

house, the latter rode off at full speed in the direction of Windsor.

As if some traitorous imp had planned it, Colonel Trevanion's designs against the peace and integrity of an honest heart, were the instruments of his own harm. In the metropolis, Hollis had found facilities, for privately learning to read written hand, which, in those days, were of rare access in the country. Applying himself diligently, therefore, to the great work of becoming a *scollard*, it cannot be denied that he made astonishing progress in it; thus he was now competent to read, without guessing at a single word, the whole of the letter of which he was the bearer. Having stopped at an obscure inn, off the road, after the first stage, he called for refreshment in a private room, then, fastening the door, drew forth the important papers.

His fixed purpose, he thought, was to open them; for he had argued the matter over with himself all the way, and, although not yet satisfied that he was justified in violating even the trust of a villain, zeal for those he was bound to by every tie of gratitude, and, it must grievingly be owned, burning resentment of Colonel Trevanion's

Digitized by Google

conduct towards the weak-spirited object of his affection, triumphed over better principles. He had made up his mind to brave the consequences; which would, of course, be disastrous to himself, should the letter turn out a mere effusion of gallantry. Even had he been qualified to invent a plausible excuse for failing in the letter's delivery, Hollis was too brave, and naturally too upright, to lie for his own interest; he determined, therefore, let the contents of the packet be harmless or villanous, to stand by the avowal of how they became known to him, and to meet the fury of Mansell and his master, by whom, of course, a severe reckoning would be separately demanded of him.

It was not the fear of man, then, which caused the poor fellow's courage to fail as his unsteady fingers pressed the seal of the parchment. He tried to think over again all the arguments that had convinced and cheered him on, during his fast ride. His heart and head were too disordered: he could only feel that he was doing wrong, mainly (he chose to think) in the hope of obtaining evidence against a traitor to his master. Ejaculating a hasty apostrophe,

Digitized by Google

asking Heaven's forgiveness, he broke the wax, and, taking out a letter concealed, under Mrs. Marian Fane's address, saw it superscribed to "The Fairest of the Fair." That delicate cover removed, the momentous one appeared, directed to "The most honoured and pious father."

Every drop of blood in Hollis's body flew to his face, at this witness of Colonel Trevanion's secret correspondence with one of a priesthood, abhorrent to his notions of the true church. The consequences of the discovery were in an instant before him; when, after drawing one or two deep breaths, he broke the third seal, and read, attentively, what follows: —

"Reverend father, and dear friend!

"I am instant in acquainting you, that there hath been my Lord Woodvill, from Holland, at our house this morning, to seek speech at mine uncle, touching the matter of my cousin's outlawry; the lawfulness of which he boldly engages to disprove: and which, I fear, he hath somewhat got the means to do, maugre all my pains to that matter's hinderance. The knight, luckily, was out of sorts in his chamber; so, being provided with his orders, to keep all busy-

Digitized by Google

bodies from molesting him now, I was bold in denial to this meddler. He then held high and insulting language to me, respecting my dealings about the heirship, which you well know, reverend father, I desire principally, to do his majesty service, and to keep out one whose principles and practice unhappily lead to anarchy and rebellion: as what we hear of him amongst the discontented of the Cevennes, at this very moment, goeth to certify; to say nought of the wife he hath chosen. I fear me, this Woodvill knoweth more of our policy than may be safe; so that if he once attain to an audience of my uncle, it is past the scope of my poor wit to guess what mischief may ensue. He taxed me roundly with that business of the Spring Garden; and showed himself so well acquainted with my privy visits to yourself, and other matters of great moment to us, that I must believe he hath had spies on service; and was the tale-bearer to my fair cousin of those things I guessed not how the boasting Villiers got at. Be that as it may, he made his charges with such confidence before Becket, that I had nothing for it but heat and high words; so, to provoke him into some inde-

Digitized by Google

cency of passion under my uncle's roof; which the latter would have easily taken as argument against his errand. At length I bethought me it would be best to cajole him with the expectation of seeing mine uncle; so I straightway assumed much resentment of his accusations, and dared him to repeat them on the day after the morrow. This he hotly promised: so we have him at advantage. Having let out that he is one of a knot of gentlemen engaged to examine into and disprove the justice of the king's proclamation touching Arundell, surely such a confession affordeth ground for his arrest, upon the plea of examination as to the real nature of such a combination, amongst English subjects dwelling beyond sea, where, it is well known, this Woodvill hath taken service under the Prince of Orange. Or this temporary seizure might be bottomed upon suspicion of his having had some hand in young Maltravers's escape, who you think was the stripling met by Mistress E. H. In the last case, however, I pray you be careful, for my honour's credit, not to make citation of that young gentlewoman's adventure, but let the suspicion arise out of Woodvill's relationship to the

Digitized by Google

youth, and his ungracious absence from the coronation.

"Now, if it please you, good father, I would, in all humbleness, recommend this gallant's immediate and private seizure, so that he may be kept out of the way, at least until the matter of my marriage be concluded, agreeable to his majesty's gracious commandment; because, if the contract be signed and sealed, come what may, we are safe. If you fall in with my suggestion, I must further crave, that better care be taken of an officer to arrest him, than was done when that pestilent Philips was the game afoot. I do, with much importunity of desire, pray you to see this done quickly; else all will be ruined, which at present goeth prosperously. Mine uncle continueth much pleased with Lady Eleanor, whose rare silence and discretion, keep her conversion beyond the scope of any one's fancy. Behold, father, what risks I dare, through sheer royalty, when I thus take to wife one of a different faith to mine own; knowing, as I do, how greatly a woman's loving rhetoric, persuadeth with a man on such subjects. But in this, as others, I would trust myself to Heaven's ordering, and to holy

Digitized by Google

counsel; being, as yet, I do confess, but an indifferent professor of that creed, for which my hot-headed cousin threw away his birthright. Would I were of your religion, now, that you might shrive me for all I have done perforce throughout this business! To say nought of the silly puppeting of my uncle with the wire of the barony, I am shoulder deep in lies, to keep him on the track of duty to our gracious sovereign: he hath ever a hankering to look back upon his old independence of the court. However, I may not complain, since I took the little black phial into my counsel: his dose to-night will put him into heavenly temper for the signing to-morrow; then the next day, and the next, he will be in a humour dark enough for doubting even me, his trusty nephew, should that Woodvill 'scape by your over security, honoured father. Now, as that cavalier seemeth a conjuror, should he have the rarest of our contrivances canvassed before his majesty, and should his majesty really not have winked, but fancied he saw all, why, then, you, father, may chance to fare as ill with our liege, as I may do with my self-exalting kinsman. Weak heads like not visible government by

Digitized by Google

strong ones. Once, and again, then, I pray you be instant in putting our enemy in durance, until the hurricane may blow harmlessly. And, as you find it convenient, I pray you let his majesty have part in my present trouble. I am not ashamed to own, that it is my ambition to have his highness know with what heartiness I expose myself for his sake, to grievous affronts and misconceptions of my motives, in my endeavour to draw mine uncle to serve his majesty, in his views for the extinction of a factious and intolerant spirit amongst his people; and how great would be my ruin, were our magazine to be blown up, by mere indolence in not snatching up the firebrand just going to set it a light.

"If you should hear aught of his majesty's pleasure to instruct me of, you will use your discretion as to keeping my messenger: but I must again urge instant despatch in the matter of Lord Woodvill."

With the addition of initials by way of signature, here ended this artful composition, in which it was hard to say whether the most cold-blooded villany or the vilest hypocrisy were most glaring. Even the untutored Hollis felt that the perpetual

Digitized by Google

repetition made in it of its motives being disinterestedly loyal, was much like the modest demeanour of a known courtezan. Hollis did not stay to ponder upon such parts of it as required study to follow out their meaning; he comprehended sufficient, to satisfy him that, if ever such an act as that of breaking a seal could be pleaded for from the iniquity of what was concealed under it, his offence was of the sort. How he was to proceed now, was the question.

Once he thought of seeking out Lord Woodvill and taking his counsel; then he considered whether it were not better to impart the matter to Miss Trevanion, and so put it into her hands for management; and, lastly, he decided that it would be best to go direct to Sir Fulk, with the avowal of his fault, and, what his sophist heart termed, his excuse in his hand. The difficulty lay in getting Sir Fulk alone, and ensuring his hearing of any charge against his nephew. To produce good, also, the disclosure must be made before noon the next day; and, on the present one, every remaining hour was allotted to the entertainment of Lady Eleanor Stafford's family. A scheme, however, for effecting his object, darted into

Digitized by Google

the young rustic's brain, and, resolute to dare it, he remounted Mansell's horse, and got home in time to make one of the attendants at dinner.

A rich banquet nobly served, and waited upon by numerous servants in the state liveries of both the illustrious houses about to be united, was surrounded by rank, beauty, youth, and hilarity. The occasion of the meeting was ostensibly a happy one; therefore mirth and feasting did not seem inappropriate. The bride elect was reserved and retiring; but her sisters, not having her fancied obligation of controlling natural vivacity, laughed and talked with their future brother and other gentlemen, very agreeably.

Miss Trevanion, who was present, unlike her bearing at a somewhat similar feast, was calm and collected: a feeling was within her, akin to that of the martyr, who disregards suffering for one great object's sake: she had formerly been called to join in revelry over what she then believed the grave of her brother's honour; now, she was only witnessing the triumph of a successful villain over his fortunes. The clearness of her pale cheek never darkened,

Digitized by Google

except when she looked towards her father; then tears gathered in her eyes: for she saw that, in spite of all his efforts to appear otherwise, he was disturbed into momentary sensations of deliriousness. Colonel Trevanion, to every eye but that of one menial waiting near the side-board, appeared to the greatest advantage; for, as he managed it, a by-stander would have found it hard to say, whether he felt more delicate admiration of his bride in-prospect, or grateful affection for his uncle, who was to him the fountain of all good on earth. Hollis, with loathing, heard one of the ladies whisper, "How handsome he is!" for, to his sight, he seemed fiendish in aspect; and there were moments when some accidental remark, drew forth a sentiment from the hypocrite so at variance with his conduct, that the young man was ready to spring upon him where he sat, and stifle him with a gripe.

Well aware that certain of the party present, were to meet the following morning to sign papers which, once completed, would irrevocably consign the inheritance to Dunbar, Hollis impatiently counted every minute of the hours which were given to the banquet, the wine cup, and the

Digitized by Google

dance; these crept with him, and flew with the young couples who were soon seen in the great saloon skimming gracefully, like swallows in summer, to lively music. But even their pleasure was obliged to yield to ordinary rules; so that by midnight the call for lights! lights! reached him in an under room, and apprized him the company were breaking up. He then evaded the bustle of domestics, and slipped up to his master's chamber, where he concealed himself, not without momentary hesitation, behind the bed.

In this situation, he heard the voices of the lackeys and pages below, as the different members of the noble family took their departure through the hall. Very soon after, he heard lighter steps ascending to the different chambers; doors closed; fires were roused up: and then came the well-known tread of the stately knight; yet not singly — his nephew was with him.

At this mischance, it must be confessed Hollis's heart beat for a few seconds less healthfully than before. If he were detected by Colonel Trevanion in so dubious a situation as this of concealment in his

Digitized by Google

master's chamber, he might, without sinister purpose on Dunbar's part, be made an immediate sacrifice. Hollis, however, knew that no arms would be found upon him — nothing save the proof he was bringing of that person's iniquity; and he strengthened himself with the thought.

As they entered, the uncle and nephew were pursuing a conversation begun in their progress from below: it consisted, upon Sir Fulk's part, of grave and affectionate counsel to his young kinsman respecting his future conduct as the sworn friend and protector of an inexperienced and innocent woman; explaining to him that he was about to engage himself not merely to such protection of her, as it is man's duty and privilege to afford all the sex; but the protection of his young wife's mind from evil, of her heart from sorrow, her reputation from taint.

The knight spoke with unusual emotion; for the subject renewed his wife's image in its maiden purity; and with that, came certain bitter memories, which visibly agitated his voice and interrupted his words.

Colonel Trevanion's answers were admirably suited to his uncle's mood, and as

Digitized by Google

ably delivered. He was profuse in his acknowledgments of his kinsman's exceeding bounty; renounced all claim from merit, or right from near relationship, to stand where his uncle's free grace had placed him; adding, in a tone which hinted he was affected to tears, that he wished to God he who ought to have been in that place, were really there, with his humble loyalty and dutiful affection.

At this impious appeal, Hollis wellnigh made himself be heard, by a movement of honest indignation. With a sidelong glance he could see both speakers; and he thought, that at this allusion to his son, the knight's visage changed yet more; though he went on, leisurely exchanging his rich suit for a night-gown of dark brocade, which his nephew helped him to, having discharged his valet at the door.

A moment or two afterwards, the colonel, with well-acted concern, craved his uncle's leave for once, and only once, to disturb him again upon a certain subject; and ere Sir Fulk granted the request, hurried out a short and miscoloured statement of Lord Woodvill's visit that day, together with his own desire that his honoured uncle

Digitized by Google

would either see the officious nobleman, or give him refusal in the shape of a letter from his own hand.

The knight, as he expected, passionately interrupted him; protesting against ever again subjecting himself to the painful agitations he had gone through; chiding his nephew for heeding the scandals of the party concerning himself; and loftily promising to write such a note on the morrow as should end Lord Woodvill's interference. The colonel made a faint effort to shake this resolution; then seemingly deeply affected by his kinsman's generous scorn of all insinuations against his disinterestedness, he bowed and promised obedience.

"I was better pleased to-day," Sir Fulk said, abruptly, after short musing, "with Aura. If I can keep her from meddling friends, who would turn her poor head with their fancies, she may, perchance, grow to abide with some nobleness, the evils her father has schooled himself to breast and bear. I would not be utterly childless in my old age!"

Here was another opportunity for Colonel Trevanion to lavish professions of a son's devotedness to the honoured uncle

Digitized by Google

who was bestowing on him the dearest blessings of life: he did, indeed, promise largely for himself and his offspring; mixing his protestations with several kindly notices of his uncle's looks, fearing he had made over-exertion of his spirits to do his future relations honour.

"I am, in truth, not of my best to-night," Sir Fulk answered, in a tone unusually depressed. — "Over excitement, doubtless — pleasurable excitement! — I am quite ready for my bed; so give me a few drops of your Turkish medicine, and it will quiet these nerves, that, like fretful children, cry for rest:—fifteen, or twenty—not more, Dunbar. I have thought when I took more, that my head was out of sorts afterwards—I was sensible of wandering—unfitness for business."

"Oh, never, sir!" exclaimed Dunbar, in his common tone of cheerfulness; — "I never knew you unable to transact business; your head is always clear and calm. I wish I could say so of your dear heart! —but that is not right of me," he added, appending an air of contrition to his flatteries. — "I never found the effect you mention, upon myself. Accidental disor-

Digitized by Google

der of the stomach, perhaps, in your case. Fifteen, or twenty drops, you say?" and advancing to a chamber-lamp, and taking out a pocket phial, curiously encased in basket-work of silver, Hollis distinctly saw him pour four times that quantity, into the antique cup of embossed gold, which stood partly full of the posset it was Sir Fulk's custom to drink as a night draught, upon a table by the bed.

The knight motioned him to let it remain there. "I will drink it anon," he said. — "Good night, nephew! — pleasant dreams to you!" he added, forcing a smile. "Your true life is beginning. May it prove happier in one sense than your uncle's — in another it cannot be!" Again the image of a wife, early lost, floated before him, and he repeated, with more obvious emotion, "Good night! good night!"—He pressed his nephew's hand convulsively as he spoke: the false wretch kissed his in return; and a moment afterwards, the one was left to his sad memories, the other gone with his witching hopes.

Now beat the heart of Hollis almost audibly, as he heard his master's full, long-drawn sigh, when he thought himself alone! To his ear, every pulse in his own body

Digitized by Google

beat louder than the ticking of the clock which stood Time's sentinel, solemn and tall, as if worthy of its office, in a high ebony case near the door. He waited for the moment when he might fancy Colonel Trevanion safely lodged in his chamber: meanwhile the knight traversed the apartment slowly and sorrowfully.

"It will not do!" he exclaimed, at length. "Oh, this weight! this weight!" and striking his hand repeatedly upon his breast, he stopped in his melancholy walk. Then he advanced to the fire, and clasping both hands over his brow, leaned up against the cold marble of the chimney-piece, evidently without heeding its coldness; his voice and action expressed the deepest sense of desolation. His face was hidden; but the half-grey head, which, till of late, had showed only a silver hair here and there amongst its jet — the attenuated hands — the feebler tones, proved that storms had already made a ruin of what time had spared. Hollis's unsophisticated heart was full to bursting: he could not rudely interrupt such privacy of grief, and he stood still, fearing to draw breath.

Lost in dismal thoughts, Sir Fulk remained some time in the position he had

Digitized by Google

taken: at length, raising himself, he exclaimed; "that foul marriage!—all—all but that, I think!"—Every feature of the father's face was now full of his son: but as if anxious to rid himself of stinging feelings, he stretched out his arm to take the cup Dunbar had drugged so potently. At this sight Hollis forgot consequences to himself; and rashly springing out from behind the bed-hangings, dashed the relic from his master's hand. It was well for him that he had to do with a man habitually present to himself upon every occasion of personal danger: for Sir Fulk seeing a person rush out upon him, directly seized the sword which lay duly unsheathed every night by his bed side, and retreating a few paces, ejaculated Hollis's name in a tone of pure astonishment.

Hollis, indeed, was now upon his knees before him, in an attitude of humble supplication.

"Struck you that cup out of my hand by chance, or design?" the knight cried. Hollis could not answer: his lips parched by the nervous emotion with which he had been so long watching, could not separate with a single articulate sound.

Digitized by Google

"Speak, fellow!" resumed the knight, anger beginning to flash from his eyes; "hast thou committed theft or murder, that thou comest eaves-dropping here, to crave my protection? out with the truth!"

"Neither theft nor murder—nor aught but in love and duty to your honour!" replied Hollis, recovering the power of speech by degrees. "I crave only your full reading of this here letter;" and he drew the momentous one, trembling, from his breast.

"From thyself?" carelessly questioned the knight, taking the paper, and imagining it some witless petition of his servant's about marriage or change of service. Hollis did not answer; he raised himself, however, upon one knee, so as to preserve, along with his humble posture, the ability of springing up to bar the return of Colonel Trevanion, should any thing bring him back. Resolute not to let him enter, be the consequence what it might, until his master had gone through the evidence against him, he now kept his eyes in alternate watch upon the latter, and the door.

"From my nephew!" exclaimed Sir Fulk, in an altered tone, as he was un-

Digitized by Google

folding the paper in front of the lamp. "What meaneth this, sirrah? this letter is not for me."

"I know it is not," replied Hollis, his voice sharpened by intense anxiety; "but there are notable things in it. Those drops I was so bold as overcast ——"

Sir Fulk broke in upon him like a clap of thunder. "Scum! dost thou come to insinuate that there was aught evil in that cup! Who setteth thee on to this?—thy sister? my daughter's waiting wench! Or thy mad sweetheart, mistress Eveleen Hungerford's Abigail? Away with thee, on the instant, to my nephew, and ask his pardon. He shall have my leave to condemn thee to the stocks, or a sound whipping; much as I once rated thee."

"I will die before I go to Colonel Trevanion now!" Hollis firmly answered, yet not rising from his lowly position. "I care not what becomes of myself afterwards: — only, honoured sir, as you love your own soul, and would not league with devils, read this letter. I am willing to face the colonel directly after; only look on this cover." In his trepidation poor Hollis presented that addressed to "the

Digitized by Google

Fairest of the Fair," which, although it called the vexed blood into the knight's face, seemed merely indicative of some unworthy connection which he might hope his nephew's marriage was to end.

"Let thy betters' follies, teach thee to look to thine own!" he said, sharply: "thou darest not say my nephew has betrayed innocence? — it cannot be! So away with this love-tale. Sirrah, begone I say! I took thee for a different man!"

"No love-tale!" persisted Hollis, "I call Heaven to witness! but foul play against your honour — against our church — against his majesty! The colonel telling dark secrets to some popish priest; (and here he displayed the cover he had first intended,) your honour puppetted, 'tis said here, by the wires of the barony."

Hollis's pleadings were no longer required: some words had caught the eye of Sir Fulk in the papers he was thrusting back into their envelopes, and those uttered by Hollis, at once clove him from his scruples. His very brow struck fire, whilst exclaiming "make fast the door!" and plunged straight into the letter.

He read as though he was devouring

Digitized by Google

what his eyes took in; yet ever and anon he stopped,—turned the papers over,—examined their folding, their quality;—looked with a steadfast gaze upon the seal, the characters, the signature, which, though but initials, had the conformation peculiar to the tracing of the hand by which they were said to be written — then returned to his perusal with keener intentness. In the midst of the second reading, he staggered with closed eyes, and the papers grasped by his hand, back towards the bed, and, falling against it, uttered a deep and startling groan. Hollis would have approached to assist him, believing him ill; but the knight motioned him off, continuing some time incapable of a greater effort. At length recovering from the shock he had received, he raised his head, and showed his face, white even to his lips, with the violence he was using over his tempestuous feelings. "Hollis!" he cried, "you have either done me the greatest harm, or the greatest service one man can do another. If this paper be a forgery — but — how came you by it?" and as he spoke, his foregone convictions appeared unsettling.

"So, please your honour," returned

Digitized by Google

Hollis, "I will tell that before the colonel himself, though he kill me on the instant. Now that I have got your honour to see that there is knavery practising, I care not what hurt comes to myself."

Sir Fulk gazed upon the face of Hollis, which, brave and bright with honest purposes, was brightened the more by the survey. He had advanced some steps towards the door, with the intent of going straight to his nephew, but calmed, because less inclined to believe the letter a forgery, he stopped, saying, "Not now,—not to-night. I must be myself!—To-morrow — you have boldness to affront your own act, I suppose?"

"I hope I have, sir," replied his modest yet resolute companion, "and I hope there is much happiness in store for your honour."

"No happiness for me, Hollis!—none, none!" Sir Fulk involuntarily exclaimed; "all fail me!—they have wrecked me amongst them!" He was thinking then of his children and his nephew; for as yet he saw every thing confusedly; apprehending little beyond his own deception; and his kinsman's ingratitude. "But I will hear

Digitized by Google

now, what you have to say further of those papers — the way you came by them," he added, and sat down mechanically.

Hollis, thus encouraged, and assured against interruption from without, by the fastening of the door, here gave a minute detail of every circumstance connected with his opening of the packet; which included, of course, the grounds for his suspicion of Colonel Trevanion; what he had himself traced of that gentleman's underhand intimacy with the popish leaders; what his sister Susannah had learned from Lord Danby's page; and, lastly, what had been confessed to him by Damaris Flavel. He was careful to say nothing which he could not prove: neither entering into a defence of Mr. Trevanion, nor hazarding a single conjecture as to the probability of more villany than was contained in the letter before him.

The knight listened in perfect silence, although his features were often suddenly contracted, and his lips moved with great quickness, as if forming words after his thoughts. When Hollis concluded, he read the letter a third time, evidently comparing its clauses, one by one, with what he

Digitized by Google

had been hearing. The conclusion was something too like conviction for further hesitation; he raised himself from his chair, and putting out his hand with a mixture of dignity and kindness, suffered his servant to take and kiss it respectfully. "You may be gone, now, good Hollis," he said; "I shall sift this matter, with my nephew, in your presence to-morrow. Fear nothing; I will protect you from his anger, be he what he may! If there be villany practised here against him, instead of me, I do not think you have any share in contriving it. Keep the matter close, and be ready for my summons directly after breakfast." Hollis eagerly promised to be in waiting; renewed the most fervent thanks for having been listened to by his honoured master, and, with eyes moistened by so much extraordinary emotion, bowed and departed.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VIII.

It would be vain to attempt describing the chaos of Sir Fulk Trevanion's mind whilst hearing, without noting, every hour struck by the clock, he now lay back in his great chair—now walked the room in a fever of head and heart. The letter, still in his hand, was read again, and again, and again; until every sense and faculty seemed dulled by steeping in its dark subject, and the perturbed reader was obliged to lay it down, and sit, with hands pressing his temples, striving after some fixity of thought and purpose.

There was nothing, indeed, in that letter upon which hope might seize for certain good hereafter; no direct acknowledgment of Arundell Trevanion's innocence of disloyal sentiments; no confession of other practice against him by his enemies, than that of doing their utmost to keep him in that alienated state to which his own impetuosity, and over ardour, in a good cause, had doomed him.

Digitized by Google

Barren, therefore, and dismal was the prospect that presented itself to the every-way deceived parent and kinsman; — life laid bare of every domestic blessing; — neither child, nor brother's child, true to him. One of a softer nature would have wept the heart's tears over such a view: but Sir Fulk Trevanion's impulse upon occasions like the present, was ever a resentful one. Feeling the injury in proportion to the estimate he made of his own worth, he did not suffer so much at first from the anguish of disappointed affection: sorrow came afterwards, abiding long and destroyingly. Although certainly attached to the civil and religious institutions of his country, and very jealous of his character as a loyal but independent gentleman, the interest he took in the maintenance of its purified church, was only that of a convinced understanding. If his heart ran not counter to that interest, it yet flowed not warmly along with it; thus he was not well provided with such habits of thought and feeling as are found most precious in seasons of unexpected calamity. It was long, therefore, this night, ere the brightening ray fell upon his soul, and showed him his deep obliga-

Digitized by Google

tion to that gracious Providence, who had permitted this wonderful discovery to be made in time to preserve him from settling the venerated patrimony of their family upon an ungrateful kinsman. One grace succeeded to another; and as more light shone on him, he felt a humbled sense of his own lack of desert in this instance; remembering how determinately he had refused to question his nephew's sincerity and his son's utter guiltiness in days past. Imperfect as were his perceptions of his own wants and errors, Sir Fulk yet felt them sufficiently now, to address himself frequently to Heaven, in short ejaculatory prayer: and, troubled as were his petitions, — mixed as they were with the human infirmities of lapsed thoughts, kindling wrath, and self-justifyings, they returned upon him the dews of tender mercy: his meditations gradually became less turbulent; and although he slept not all that long night, his waking visions were not wholly uncheered by a faint ray of hope for the future.

Hollis, too, in his homely chamber lay sleepless. A generous impatience kept him waking; whilst the unconscious traitor he was to unmask on the morrow lay dreaming

Digitized by Google

of its expected great event, the signing of a certain law paper. Early that morrow, Colonel Trevanion entered the general breakfasting-room, as his cousin appeared by another entrance. Mr. Becket was already there, carefully looking, as he was wont, that nothing for his patron's use was forgotten by the servants.

Dunbar's conciliating salutation to both persons was coldly received by the one, and reverentially by the other. Sir Fulk came in the latest; and, to an anxious enquiry of his daughter, suggested by the extraordinary disturbance of his complexion, answered, that his night had been particularly uneasy to him. Colonel Trevanion, fearing he had administered too much opium, would have taken his hand, according to his custom, to ascertain whether it were not over-fevered; but the knight adroitly evaded this, without appearing to do so, and took a seat in silence, somewhat remote from him.

Every one present being equally well acquainted with Sir Fulk's humour, proceeded to the business of the meal, in respectful obedience to his known wish of being little noticed when indisposed. Miss Trevanion, who had long ceased to entertain evil thoughts of Mr. Becket, addressed him, in

Digitized by Google

despite of her cousin's playful sallies on trivial things, which he took care should appear intended to amuse without drawing forth his uncle. Well was it that he saw not under the eyelids, which he fancied weighed down by a potent drug; the expression there would have warned him of the coming storm. He was gallantly assisting Miss Trevanion in mixing her father's chocolate, when the latter said, in a guarded tone, — "Becket! know you which of his majesty's chaplains — or priests — what call you them? — are now in waiting on the king at Windsor?"

The question was a simple one, yet it arrested Colonel Trevanion's movement, as he was lifting up one of the china vessels. Mr. Becket quietly answered, he believed — he understood — he thought, it was Father Peters.

"Heard you ever any scandal against that holy father?" resumed Sir Fulk, after a short pause, and his voice began to tremble with suppressed passion. "I have some notion he was suspected, of carrying on an intrigue with a favourite lady of his master's. — Look to what you are doing, nephew! you spill the cream."

Digitized by Google

There was something in the tone as well as sense of the preceding words, which gave strange effect to the last inconsequent ones, for Colonel Trevanion's face was bloodless after their utterance. Poor Mr. Becket confusedly crossed himself, whilst stammering out a sincere denial of the gross scandal; at which his patron smiled, and the coward traitor breathed again.—"Aura," Sir Fulk resumed, turning kindly to his daughter, "you are curious in dreams, I bethink me: tell me the import of this. Methought last night that I was with Dunbar and his bride, at their espousals, and the blessing was given them, not by a divine of our own church, but this Peters, just spoken of."

Sir Fulk stopped abruptly; and as he did so, Colonel Trevanion instinctively raised his bent head, to see if there were aught as ominous in his uncle's look as in his sentences; but the falchion eye of that terrible face was ready to meet his; and, as if it had cloven him asunder, he recoiled with a sort of gasp.

"You are not well, sir!" observed Sir Fulk, with deadly coldness; and as he spoke, Dunbar's paleness changed into ashy grey. "Have you been making too liberal

Digitized by Google

use of the little black phial?—or have you been assisting your bride elect, at some midnight mass?—'Sdeath! why waste I time on such miserable fooling?—Measureless villain! know you this letter?"

The knight held out his own letter to him: every feature of the former's face striking fire as he did so; drops of agony standing on his brow, and the convulsive action of his teeth clashing audibly. Miss Trevanion started up, and hurried to the side of her father, with a wild expression of hope and fear and amaze in her gestures. Mr. Becket was about to retire; but his patron commanded him to stop, saying, that what he did, should no longer be done in a corner. Then calling loudly for Hollis, who appeared on the instant, he once more turned to his astounded nephew. "I will deal justlier with you, sir, than I did by my unhappy son. I will hear all you have to say: no middle person to swell the indictments and pervert evidence. Here are your accusers: this honest fellow, and this one sheet of paper—(striking the paper violently, yet firmly retaining it),—disprove them, if you can."

Colonel Trevanion by this time had re-

Digitized by Google

covered himself; and taking his stand, though, it must be owned, with an inward notion that a pit of perdition yawned before him, he advanced to his uncle, and stooped to scrutinize the paper. He looked long enough at it, to make it evident he had read some of its lines, then raising himself, said indignantly, "Sir, this is no writing of mine. The hand, I own, is ably counterfeited; for had you shown it me without hinting at its contents, I should instantly have condemned myself, by admitting it to be mine own."

"Not your writing, sir!" echoed Sir Fulk. "Who but yourself could have known so well how to distort my picture?"

"I misrepresent my honoured uncle!" exclaimed Dunbar, with well-acted resentment and sorrow. "Have I your gracious leave to see this forgery?"

The leave was moodily granted; and again that little sheet of paper was perused with apparent close attention. Colonel Trevanion, in truth, read it diligently, that he might see what he had penned, and frame answers for it: finding, however, that none would serve his purpose, he resolved upon the villain's last and, generally,

Digitized by Google

surest card — deliberate, unflinching denial of the act charged upon him.

"Now, sir, what say you to it?" enquired the knight, darkly eyeing him.

"I declare it to be a forgery, sir; that is what I say," replied Dunbar, in a tone of firm self-confidence; "and the hand that framed it, you see, had not the boldness to sign my name at full: — 'twas cunningly done that! — well imitated initials were enough to shake my kindred's faith in me — but not of such import as to risk the imitator's neck on the gallows. I might have jested at the trick; but since I see it hath shaken your dear love, may the vengeance of Heaven light upon its contriver!" Here his eyes flashed with real fury upon Hollis, whose brow braved it, though in respectful silence.

The knight stood at gaze, momentarily struck by what his nephew said, and the high tone of his defence: the latter saw his advantage. "Yes, my uncle!" he added, impetuously, "I am a marked man, a hunted man! persons have leagued against me; you have had proof of that before. They cannot bring one real evidence against mine honour and faithfulness, so they mon-

Digitized by Google

strously contrive them. They suborn one witness, and cheat another; this worthy fellow, for instance, who would not, I do believe, enter into this service had he not been duped by my enemies. Nothing is so easy as forgery: written characters are soon copied by adroit folk: conversations may have secret listeners; and that, set down on paper by one that came not fairly by their knowledge—" He stopped, literally for want of breath, so greatly was he agitated, and so eager was he in pressing the advantage he saw himself obtaining.

Miss Trevanion now threw herself at her father's feet, with a flushed cheek, and clasped hands: — " I do not beseech you, sir, not to listen to that serpent; but I do implore you, for your sweet soul's sake, try this matter out, as you did nobly determine on its first broaching. I have much to confess, and I will confess it now, be the end what it may; so that you, my honoured father, will but sift every one's evidence. You know, I know not the contents of that letter; but I charge my cousin with a foul act of treachery against myself."

" I have not to learn your aversion unto me, fair cousin," Dunbar hastened to say;

Digitized by Google

"but, so please you, I do trust my uncle's graciousness will not let my very life be crushed out by fresh accusations, ere I find breath to answer each in its turn! Sir," he continued, "most dear and reverend sir, may I not question your servant, here, how he came by this letter? and how he may be supposed to have had such an one from me intrusted to him? and may I be secured, meanwhile, against turbulent interruption?" His glance at Miss Trevanion hinted at her exclusion from the room; but Sir Fulk's temporary return to confidence was over; and he replied, darkly, "Make the most of all you may truly use in your own defence, nephew. If this paper be a forgery, you have exquisite enemies: so rarely have they counterfeited, not merely your hand, but your fashion of persuading! If it be not one, then shall you find your uncle too hard for puppeting with any wire!"

Dunbar's heart quailed at the stern paleness of his uncle's countenance, whilst pronouncing the last offensive phrase. There lay the sting, he felt, of his fatal letter; and, for a few seconds, he despaired of extracting it. Marvelling, too, that Sir Fulk

Digitized by Google

rather pressed home that offence, than charged him, as might have been expected, with an intent to drug him into death's sleep. Summoning back, however, all his spirits, he applied himself to the task of catechising Hollis, with the air of a man determined to prove his innocence.

Hollis's answers were plain and concise: he varied not in a single circumstance of what he had primarily related to his master; confining himself, however, to mere replies. But as these involved other charges against the colonel, such as depended upon the veracity of Susannah and Damaris, the colonel became aware of what was further upon his uncle's mind on this subject. These additional accusations, added to what he feared his cousin was resolute to avow, formed a mass of complex evidence, which he knew it would be in vain for him to attempt at separately refuting. There was no path for him, except that he had already entered, — straight-forward falsehood. "My enemies may gain their ends," he answered, in a tone of sad respect, addressing his uncle; "but never will I cease denying their foul allegations. Lord Danby's page, unless he spoke with me, cannot

Digitized by Google

positively swear that he has not mistaken another man for me, when he says I entered oft with the jesuit Peters. As for the young woman's tale of Lord Gray's papers — it is a pity his secretary fell at Sedgemoor, to witness —— I thought it was notorious that her wits are injured: more than once in Cornwall she hath pursued me with idle talk, which I piece out, by remembering having seen her amongst the recaptured people set loose from the rebels in Dorsetshire, and put down for craziness; but I was mistaken, belike, and she hath had wit enough to fancy it might get her a wedding portion, by joining other heads in contriving your poor kinsman's ruin. It is a pity, methinks," here he turned towards Hollis, whose complexion was varying from controlled passion, "that none of you thought of providing a witness for her strange adventure. I am bold to say, my honoured uncle will not accept so many devilish charges against one hitherto beyond all suspicion, unsupported by other credence than the accused's tale; each accuser having their interest in the accused's condemnation."

Again a faint gleam broke out through

Digitized by Google

the black cloud of Sir Fulk Trevanion's aspect, encouraging his nephew. "None of them," the dissembler resumed, looking direct at Hollis, for he was careful not to glance at his cousin, "will couple falsehood with the king's august name? It is for my uncle himself to recollect how much, and upon what testimony was shown him of a certain exile's history by his majesty."

"I do, I do recollect!" ejaculated the knight, laying his hand upon his brow, with a feeling of immediate confusion in his faculties: then, a moment after, — "But Arundell's offences are not now the question: he hath done his part in the murder of me; so have you all, mayhap."

"Oh, not your daughter, not your daughter!" Miss Trevanion interrupted, pursuing his perturbed movements on the floor, and striving to clasp his knees. "I have not always obeyed you, honoured sir; but never have I dared to act against your known will, except in the fond hope of doing us all good. Hear what I have to say; I pray you hear."

"Have a care, Aura!" exclaimed Dunbar, breaking in upon her passionate address; "let not your friend's sophistries

Digitized by Google

persuade you that it is a godly sin to lie for a brother! There are insane likings too ——"

Miss Trevanion, without attending to him, or taking heed of his last insidious phrase, continued to importune her father, who, in amazement at her fearless passion of entreaty, took one of her trembling hands within his, bidding her speak out, assured that he meant to hear and sift all evidences; being determined to deal fearfully with whomsoever he found guilty of practising fraud or perfidy.

Thus admonished, Miss Trevanion, trembling all over with haste and eagerness, declined her father's invitation to rise and seat herself, but remaining humbly on her knees, with many tears, and much hysterical agitation, made full confession of her conduct in the affair of Philips. This, of course, included her cousin's sinister proceeding, in her visit to and rencontre in the Spring Garden: and as Sir Fulk Trevanion heard that a daughter of his had given the meeting to a servant in a public mall, had been met, discovered, and afterwards befriended by a young nobleman of blemished reputation, all the angry elements of his proud nature

Digitized by Google

kindled, and, for a time, poor Aura found reason to fear she had, indeed, plucked ruin upon herself. At the mention of Lord Villiers, some such suspicions as Dunbar infused, rose again to the father's thoughts, and hurried him into expressions of wrath at the whole business, which he would not otherwise have yielded to. This afforded the artful kinsman an opportunity of interposing, respectfully, and giving his fair cousin a gentle hint to withdraw.

But Miss Trevanion was now too far in the deep water to dream of getting back — safety lay in going forward.

"I am content," she cried, raising her face bathed in passionate tears, "to bear any shame, any sorrow, my father, for what I did then — God knows how lothly — what was unmaidenly! But I must crave your good leave to hear me swear, that my soul abhorreth all thoughts of what I see my cousin would intimate of me. I have no liking of my Lord Villiers — I never spoke to him before or since. Call in Susannah, good my father — question her before me — see if we agree — then send to the young lord himself, and try our separate stories by his: evil as his course hath been, I may not be-

Digitized by Google

lieve him malicious: he will not refuse to satisfy you — anon, you shall see his strange letter, if you will send for Susannah to bring it."

Colonel Trevanion's disturbance once more began to be too strong for his power over his countenance. Sir Fulk glanced at him, as he addressed Hollis: "Call in your sister, Frank! No — do you, Mr. Becket, go for the girl. You shall have justice, sir! I am bound to get back some character for common capacity in mine own businesses." The same shaft was still seen quivering in the proud heart of the knight; and he that shot it, inwardly cursed his own folly for having done it so unguardedly.

In a few minutes Susannah Hollis appeared with Mr. Becket, and by her modest confusion at sight of the party assembled, proved she had merely imagined herself summoned to her lady.

Miss Trevanion signed her to come forward. "Susannah," she said, "hie back and fetch my jewel case: we shall want you after that." Another interval of solemn silence ensued between the girl's departure and return. Her mistress then unlocked her trinket box, and taking from a sliding

Digitized by Google

drawer the letter of Lord Villiers, carefully tied round, she put it into her father's hand, at the same time addressing her maid: — "Now, Susannah, whatsoever question my honoured father pleaseth to put to you, I charge you, by your duty to God and love to me, that you answer him truly and entirely. I here acquit you of all obligations to secresy imposed by me, and not only give you free leave to do this, but do command you to answer him straightly and faithfully."

Sir Fulk had taken the letter, but he held it unopened, whilst he desired Susannah to tell him what befell herself and lady on the day they went to meet the Lord Villiers?

"I never went with my lady to meet the Lord Villiers," returned Susannah, with the courage of virtue. "I was in attendance upon her when we met him by accident."

Sir Fulk put another and another question, which she replied to, until the whole was gone through. The knight had his eye upon her face the whole time; when she concluded, he turned it upon his nephew. "That evidence was well gone through! Now for the letter."

Digitized by Google

Colonel Trevanion saw that a single hair only, sustained the sword which hung over him: for his uncle deliberately read Lord Villiers's letter aloud, loftily premising that he was secure of every one's fidelity to domestic secrets, except his, whose cause was trying. When the letter was ended, the knight returned it to his daughter, bidding her take care of the notable production; then addressing his nephew,—"Now, sir, for your answer to these charges —I mean Aura's and this nobleman's."

"I disclaim all knowledge of Lord Villiers," replied the ready deceiver; "and as for my fair cousin, she must pardon me for solemnly protesting that she hath mis-stated me — I presume, from lack of memory, or heed of what I counselled at the time. I do submissively own that she made the confidence she speaks of. I did not consent to her rash adventure — I did not tell her it was safe and warrantable for a young gentlewoman to go into the public walks at dusk—indeed, I fancied I had got her sure promise of *not* going thither, in exchange for my promise of not revealing the matter to yourself for her future protection and

Digitized by Google

advantage — and so I believed the thing had passed."

Here Miss Trevanion would have burst out upon him with an indignant exclamation, had not her father's motion silenced her. — "But this statement of Lord Villiers's?" he enquired coldly.

"Was the fruit of my own folly, perhaps," returned Dunbar, affecting candour. "I do sorrowfully confess that I did conceit Aura was taken with his fine outside, and seeing him oft lurking where she frequented, presumed to warn her that some evil speech might come of it. I am ready to admit my unwise jealousy of temper: — if he came at the knowledge of my counsel on his subject, he is one, like enough to revenge himself for the cross, by doing what would blacken me to the object of his inclinations."

"Would you tell me!" exclaimed Sir Fulk, in a voice of thunder, "that my daughter had any previous understanding with this Villiers — that she went into the Spring Garden to throw herself in his way!"

"Not so, honoured sir!" returned Dunbar, with the deepest submissiveness, for he felt the ground rocking under him; "I

Digitized by Google

simply mean, that he might be, as I doubt not he was, in base pursuit of her innocent affections — knew me for a stumbling-block — and, most likely, let into secrets of my cousin's by his wife's fair kinswoman, whose forward meddling we have had proof of—he knew when and where to recommend himself — by protection first, and a tale against me afterwards. I know not else how to account for Villiers's opportune appearance at the time 'tis said; or his ability to vamp up so plausible a charge against me, as is contained in yonder letter."

"Tush! tush!" interrupted the knight, his look and tone exalting that familiar exclamation of contempt and displeasure into something fearful. "There is no trick in such a half-insulting letter as that in question — no, nor in this I hold in my hand — each of them bears internal evidence of having been writ in earnest. This Villiers glaringly cared nought for my poor, sad-browed Aura in the way of gallantry. What motive, then, could he have to say that of you, which was false?"

"My business with you, honoured sir!" said Dunbar, with yet more humility and despondency of tone, "is not to accuse

Digitized by Google

others, but to defend myself. I can but repeat what I have just said solemnly, that I never betrayed Philips to government — you may enquire of the due authorities; I will produce you numerous witnesses — so that I am allowed time — to testify that I was in a different place when it is maintained I was going to and fro on that matter to the house of Father Peters. How know I what persons are in my cousin's confidences? She hath shown herself not very prudent about family secrets; and it is hard, indeed, if I, among all her confidants, am the only one that might be suspected of betraying her for no good to myself. Philips might as well have been informed against, without her being advised by me to go almost alone into the mall."

Sir Fulk pressed down his eyes strongly with his hand: — "I am giddy with these monstrous, contradictory averments!" he cried, looking up again. "But neither head nor heart shall fail under them. I will see this Villiers myself."

"Sir, he hath even now lost his wife," Dunbar respectfully hazarded, by way of put off.

"The fitter time for getting truth out of him!" was the knight's rough rejoinder.

Digitized by Google

"I will see him. Let me but confront him, then ——"

Sir Fulk drily interrupted his nephew — "As you talk here (smiting Dunbar's letter) of confronting my Lord Woodvill, perchance! ——"

Colonel Trevanion's blood was boiling within him at this caustic and just remark; but he mastered any show of its heat, and continued with an air of generous impetuosity — "He will not dare to maintain to my face, and at my sword's point, what he thus deals at me after an assassin's fashion. Mr. Becket knows how that other lord quailed at the idea of being forced to such maintenance of his scandals."

"I have the same faith in the infallibility of trials by combat as the trials of witches by water!" the knight answered coldly; "and Becket is not to be called up before the right time. Matters must go orderly in their succession: the thing instant, is this forgery, as you term it, of your words and signature; it shall first be enquired about of all whose names are fully or fancifully given upon these three covers."

"Heaven shield me, sir!" exclaimed the colonel, with no affected expres-

Digitized by Google

sion of dismay and alarm in his looks and voice; "am I, upon a mere accusation, to be publicly bruited abroad as one, suspected by the dearest of benefactors of doing him gross injury? and is the king's majesty to be grievously offended by having his name, and that of his ghostly director, coupled with a humble individual's in a charge like this! Only give me time to clear myself without this alarming reference. I crave but a few days—a single day—a few hours—(Colonel Trevanion spoke by agitated intervals)—nay, only so long as till my servant appear, from whom Hollis says he got that letter;" and then he paused—looked distressed—embarrassed—cast a glance at his cousin; saying, in a whisper to his uncle, "her maiden ear ought not to hear what I would now acknowledge."

Sir Fulk silently moved a little aloof from the other persons in the apartment, and his nephew following him there, hastened to make confession, as he phrased it, of a *liaison* with Lady Dorchester, in the days of his thoughtless singlehood, which he was now bidding farewell to; owning that his farewell was contained in a packet despatched by his servant the day

Digitized by Google

before; and that he did verily believe the present ruin threatening him, arose from some jest of the light-tempered fellow's, who was like enough, so to practise upon a rustic companion. Whilst the false kinsman urged the sore destruction which must befall him, if the king were to suspect how completely the fascinations of his favourite had triumphed over his young guardsman's principles, and the knight stood silent and attentive, as if suspended in purpose, Miss Trevanion regarded their distant figures with fixed intentness; her very eyes were pale from excess of anxiety: but she saw her father's upper lip curl with an expression favourable to her wishes, and the next moment heard him say, in a tempered tone, betokening fixed purpose: "Nephew, I am no longer to be blown from the straight course by a soft or rough breath; nor will I go on, hoodwinked by fond confidence in any one! If I be a wittol, the folly lieth here, not there (and he alternately struck his bosom and his brow); what I love, I am apt to lean on; not from needing support, sir, but because I have pleasure in so doing. Thus I forget to keep an eye upon the soundness of my

Digitized by Google

supporter. Thanks now to the courteous phrases of this letter, by whomsoever written, I am brought to see mine own infirmity of over-trust; and I can tell you, I will grapple with it to its choking: every thing shall be done in order. I will wait this day for the chance of your man's return. If he come before noon to-morrow, well! I will be present at your first meeting. If his confession beareth out your oaths of innocence, and he can add certain vouchers to his veracity, then all ends—except your kinsman's true sorrow for having so wounded you, and his life-long endeavours to make you due reparation; but this fellow failing you, then turn I to the jesuit Peters—for Peters I guess it to be, or my Lady Dorchester, from whom I'll warrant me for getting out the truth. My sole care now is to determine whether or no you writ this letter; the matters in it will furnish ample question afterwards. With the remotest chance of finding you innocent, I would not breathe your name, coupled with foul suspicion to any one not present here, save only those two persons who are parties to your wrong or shame."

"Most kind! most gracious!" exclaimed

Digitized by Google

Dunbar; "but what nobleness in mine uncle —your pardon, sir—it burst from me."

Sir Fulk turned away his head, and for the first time during this long discussion his eyes were moistened; for in his nephew's well-feigned tone of affectionate transport there was the music of former days. After a brief silence he said, "You must pardon me for saying, that you must confine yourself to this house, sir, for my satisfaction, until the matter in hand be set at rest. I will take care to put off with a fair excuse the party that were to have assembled here this afternoon, so that you shall not suffer damage prematurely. After your servant hath been seen and sifted, we shall know our course."

"I willingly engage, sir, to be found under this roof at any instant required," was Colonel Trevanion's present answer: "all I crave is, to have this hasty good fellow confronted with my bantering knave. Hollis cannot fear to face what he did?"

"That I will not!" the young man hotly ejaculated, colouring up between earnestness, and shyness of superiors. "If I do not appear to stand to all I have said, then believe me, and Susan, and every other

Digitized by Google

well-wisher to Mr. Arundell, the contrivers of this villany."

"I take you at your word, honest Frank," returned the colonel, offering him his hand, which the other barely touched. "If you have been an ignorant agent of this wicked or wanton counterfeiting of my writing, you will stand boldly forth to meet my servant; and if he confess not the trick——but to-morrow, or to-day, will clear me."

The last words were said with so open a brow and cheerful a tone, that once more Sir Fulk found his convictions shaken; he did not, however, express this, saying sternly, "You may leave us, nephew, so you leave not the house: let not those of the household have cause to think aught strange is afoot. We meet as usual at dinner and supper; and as I repeat that all concerned shall have the same measure of strictness dealt to them, I charge you all not to presume to send forth letter or message across this threshold without my permission."

"Pray let not worthy Master Becket come into suspicion, as it seemeth he doth, by this order including him," petitioned

Digitized by Google

the subtle Dunbar. "I exonerate him heartily from having to do with this forgery; though, from his unlucky presence at my meeting with the Lord Woodvill, my honoured uncle may ——"

"Out with these hints for devilish thoughts!" the knight passionately interrupted, turning on his nephew with a face of fire; "that stroke hath hit yourself, sir. I suspect poor Becket! — Away — I would speak now, alone with my daughter." Ere he ceased to speak he was obeyed, and one agitated heart alone, waited for the overflow of his.

For the first time in her life Miss Trevanion felt courageous in a private audience with her father; her bosom was full of high and sacred hopes, for she believed that a miraculous interposition of Providence to save her brother's rights was just manifested. Never, indeed, beat heart with a warmer sense of its obligations to Almighty Goodness, and her expanded eyes shone with the light of that blessed feeling. At her father's command she made full confession of all that had passed between herself and Miss Hungerford upon the subject of her brother; and if the substance of

Digitized by Google

this be remembered by the reader, he will not need a minute detail of Sir Fulk Trevanion's variety of emotions during his daughter's narrative. Now, there was so much to justify her persuasion of her cousin's designs, that Sir Fulk dwelt not with his usual severity upon her fault in acting secretly; yet he showed himself little affected with joy, when the corresponding testimonies of Philips and young Maltravers came in aid of that he had received through Hollis from Damaris Flavel. Nay, in proportion as his son's innocence of aught treasonable became evident, the heavier and sorer came his sighs.

Poor Miss Trevanion guessed—and at the thought her own fond trust clouded—that it was her brother's fatal marriage which weighed down consoling hopes. Whilst going through her devious and often-questioned relation, she had kept her agitation under, with some ability; but that concluded, the harassed spirits gave way, and a passionate burst of tears bore witness to their over-exertion.

Sir Fulk's sense was long closed to the sound of his daughter's convulsive weeping, so buried was he in deep and hopeless

Digitized by Google

thought: at length he roused, and looking at her with unusual tenderness of compassion, took her in his arms without speaking. He pressed her against his heart, — sealed his lips upon her brow, — and releasing her from his embrace, walked a few paces away to recover himself.

How sweetly, yet how fast, flowed her tears the while! how swelled her thanking and reviving heart!

"Aura," he said, with more self-command as he came back to her, "I fear Dunbar's guilt will be proved past doubt. He will lose what he hath been selling himself for — my estates. You will succeed your father at Treverderet, child! for Arundell, slandered though he be, never shall come there."

"Oh, say not *never*, dearest father!" exclaimed his daughter; "for if ——"

"There is no such if, as you are hoping, Aura," interrupted the knight, his whole aspect drooping. "Other matters came to me through Dunbar: some I saw in too heinous a light (now I own it), but the mortal act was made known to me by the king himself; so who can gainsay it? or, I do believe, I should have forgiven all ere

Digitized by Google

long, for my soul yearned after Arundell. Had it not been for that foul, foul deed—father, honour, country—all thrown away to gratify a gusty passion!" Here Sir Fulk threw himself into a chair, and scalding tears fell over his pale cheeks. Memory and anticipation of the future had quite subdued him.

After short indulgence of this tribute to nature, he was able to tell his daughter, that from the moment he knew the disgrace done to his family, he had endeavoured, by every means in his power, to prevent the same knowledge from spreading to others, confiding the secret to such only as knew it already; and ordering it to be told her, solely to end her vain strivings, for one she must then own to be unworthy of restoration to his home. "The king himself showed me one of several letters from the Duke of Monmouth to Mr. Fletcher, bearing date correspondent to the matter; the year of Arundell's wilful leaving of me, in which I read this very line—I see it now, methinks, in letters of fire—'Mr. Trevanion, the knight of Treverderet's son, hath married my daughter by Lady Harriet.' There was no quibble there,

Digitized by Google

Aura!" her father added, evidently struggling hard against his agonized feelings. "I know Monmouth's hand, seal, signature, as well as mine own; — I know, too, the honourable gentleman, Fletcher's kinsman, who, finding these letters amongst other papers left behind Fletcher when he went abroad to join the malecontents there, deemed it safest for himself to deliver all up to the king. There was nought, however, that damaged any one in them, except this deadly draught for me: — and it is mortal."

Sir Fulk Trevanion ceased, whilst his daughter echoing the wringing sigh which closed his brief recital, in swift thought began to array arguments for the possible extenuation of her brother's offence in making such a marriage. Fain, fain would she have imagined excellences in the character, and extraordinary circumstances in the history, of the wife he had chosen, to weigh against the deep dishonour of her parentage! — willingly would she have believed it possible for her father to pardon such a marriage! Feeling, however, that she ought not to expect it, yet wildly hoping a second miracle in their favour, she would not

Digitized by Google

utterly despair, even whilst acknowledging that she should no longer express a hope; and she merely asked, in a trembling voice, whether her father would not make quite sure of that matter too, by searching further: — suggesting application to Lord Woodvill, who had so lately come from the country where the marriage was said to be made.

At that name Sir Fulk's thoughts took a new direction, and briefly telling his daughter what steps he meant to take about the business of his nephew, transported her by the assurance that he would directly afterwards carry her himself to visit her friend Miss Hungerford, of whom he must ever beg a gracious oblivion of the great affront which he had ignorantly put upon that young lady's truth.

To hold out to the affectionate Aura any prospect of reunion with that truest of friends, was such happiness, that every painful feeling was suspended by it; and when the father and daughter separated, the former saw, with chastised pleasure, that, for once, he had poured balm upon the bleeding heart of a duteous child: — and the latter went to pour out her joy,

Digitized by Google

her grief, her wild remembrances, and wilder imaginations, in bursts of solitary prayer, or in fancied discourse with her beloved Eveleen.

Sir Fulk was not left to droop or madden in lonely inaction. This was a day of events, anxieties, business, — no moment of it admitted of inertness. The knight had to defer the meeting of lawyers and relations at his house, — to state sufficient reasons for doing so, without compromising his nephew irreparably, — to set Mr. Becket to the task of committing to paper all he remembered of the interview between Colonel Trevanion and Lord Woodvill, that he might study it at his leisure, — to send servants upon the several errands of learning where Lord Woodvill, Lord Villiers, and Miss Hungerford were to be found, — and, finally, to undergo the pain of meeting his nephew at dinner and supper, with the exterior of home-confidence, when each were far apart in all that draws kindred together.

His bitterest enemy could not well have contrived more exquisite torture for Colonel Trevanion than that which he writhed under throughout that long day. Studious

Digitized by Google

to prevent any suspicion of his intentions, he kept himself in the sight of one or other of those acquainted with what had passed, during every hour of it. He read, or he walked quietly up and down the general sitting-room, with something of dignified reserve in his smooth looks, as if he waited patiently for satisfaction of a great unkindness. Sir Fulk liked not to encounter him; for at each exchange of ordinary courtesies, habitual feelings returned, and he had to recollect, how nearly he was convinced of his having cherished a viper. When the family were about to separate for the night he turned to his nephew: — "Your servant hath not yet appeared. Until to-morrow noon, remember; — after that, I must seek another course, supposing he come not. If he own to having played a trick upon us, you must give me proof of it, or ——"

"Oh, sir!" ejaculated the colonel, in a voice tuned to gentle remonstrance, "some one must have bewitched your dear love from me, or you would not stake me to impossibilities. How can a man prove a negative in a moment?"

"I am piqued into jealousy of mine own

Digitized by Google

faculties," returned the knight, drily, "and must take leave to see that I am not outwitted."

"I know your noble nature, my honoured uncle," was the colonel's moderate reply; "and know you will be sorry for this hereafter; ay, when it will be driven from your poor kinsman's memory."

His look was intended to express a consciousness of integrity, and a secure hope of manifesting it; and not without producing some such effect, the artful Dunbar bowed round, and retired.

Sir Fulk was yet standing under the influence of this look, when Mr. Becket, who had previously been called out of the room, re-entered with a sealed packet, which, he said, was just delivered to him to carry instantly to his master, and with strict orders to give it into his own hand.

"What was the person who brought it?" enquired the knight, indifferent about opening the parcel.

"A retainer, I think, of the Rohesian family."

That answer stayed Miss Trevanion's departing steps; and her father now broke the seals, with some interest. A letter and

Digitized by Google

a roll of parchment were under the cover: he began to read the former; then impatiently threw it aside, exclaiming — "What mockery is this!"

His daughter timidly questioned if it came from her friend?

"Not from her, in sooth!" was his reply; and his brow showed how he was chafed in temper. "An insolent jest of Lady Rhoda Brandon's. On my life, I think the whole world are gone mad, or leagued against my peace! This bedlamite woman pretendeth to be sending me a voucher for our cause. Dearly shall she abide this mockery."

He spurned with his foot, whilst speaking, both the letter, and the roll of parchment which unfastening as it was spurned, caught the attention of Mr. Becket; he raised the roll, which was closely written over in small characters with discoloured ink; and examining it, exclaimed with unwonted animation — "Honoured sir, this is no mockery! — it is — it is the very instrument we wanted."

The next moment it was in the hand of Sir Fulk: his eye seemed to span its contents at once, rather than read them; and,

Digitized by Google

familiar with ancient documents, required only one searching survey of its distinctive marks, to be assured of its nature.

"By Heaven, a miracle, then!" he cried aloud: "she sends it me in right earnest. At last, Becket, we have the Barony."

All this was unintelligible to Miss Trevanion; yet something she understood from her father's latest words and the momentary fire of his countenance. She turned cold with apprehension of some court grace that might ruin her late hopes, by throwing the knight anew upon the king for favour or for gratitude, and had difficulty in praying to know what all this meant.

"It meaneth, child!" replied Sir Fulk, yet in his trance of triumph, "that your father is now, and must speedily be granted to be, the Baron Chastel-seawen. This yellow parchment is the will of our great progenitor, Sir Piers de Pomeroy; wherein he distinctly designates the Lady Amabel as his lawful issue, and she that wedded a Hungerford as his spurious offspring. — Most marvellous! — most fortunate!"

"Oh, let us take it for a happy omen!" the fond sister tremblingly ejaculated; and she looked wistfully up in her father's face.

Digitized by Google

There the light of the instant before, was quite extinguished: yet the knight's eyes remained fixed on the curious document: he looked not from it, as he said slowly,— "I have, indeed, gotten now, what my best days have been spent in seeking." Then he broke off, yet still standing in thought, as though he were weighing the value of what he had lost and what he had gained. Well could his daughter's mind follow the track of his; and her heart almost wept blood in doing so.

Sir Fulk once more roused up. "I will not say this hath come too late!" he cried, in a cheerfuller tone. "Nothing comes too late, that serveth to take off a family stigma. No more illegitimacy now, Aura, of our ancestress; — no feeling humbled before those insolent Hungerfords!"

He forgot his daughter's friend when he thus spoke of them, and she remembered her not with any displeasure of the unwitting slight.

"But who comes this from?" she enquired, still amazed, still half incredulous.

"From mine ancient enemy," was the answer, "who would fain persuade me she hath just lighted on this precious document

Digitized by Google

amongst her grandmother's forgotten hoards. Read, Becket, — read what she saith of her nobleness not brooking a moment's detention of such a document, though to her brother's damage."

The secretary did as he was bidden; and such an epistle as might be fancied from one laying claim to a merit she had not, was then listened to by Miss Trevanion. Her father quickly solved the riddle to her of this seeming act of justice, by recurring to a piece of news he had heard the day before; that the widowed Lady Hungerford had brought forth a child at seven months, and thus unexpectedly settled the question at issue between the titled sister and brother. Lord Carraton was at once satisfied to let the little heir remain in the place whereinto he was now born; and no one who knew aught of Lady Rhoda's character, could hesitate in believing that her present act of generosity or justice was solely the consequence of disappointed purposes.

During the energetic discourse which now took place between the three persons present, Mr. Becket, all placid as he was, might well have been taken for the one

Digitized by Google

most interested in its main subject; for it was he who had humbly to propose immediate activity, and to suggest certain legal steps, which it appeared wise to take, lest any caprice of fortune, such as a change of humour in the once powerful dictatress of Lord Carraton, should involve the affair in new trouble.

Sir Fulk at once gave his secretary *carte blanche* for such measures as his experience of former difficulties on the same subject warranted; commissioning him with the duties of visiting certain crown-officers and Lady Rhoda Brandon, excusing the knight's attendance for awhile, on the score of great indisposition.

"My morrow, Becket," he concluded, "must be otherwise employed, — deciding the far mightier question to me now — that I should live to say this!—of whether I have indeed been puppeted with this very wire, by a false kinsman, and a falser ——"

Monarch was on his tongue; but recollecting Becket's church, he gulped the dangerous word, and hurriedly embracing his daughter, whose heart throbbed amazedly against his, doubtful of its own joy or sor-

Digitized by Google

row, retired to meet, not his evil but his good genius, in the solitude of his chamber, where he sat him down, deeply meditating upon the vanity of every human pursuit, when pursued for itself alone; feeling now the emptiness of his own, and the awful lesson taught by the moment in which it was granted.

Meanwhile Colonel Trevanion, fast locked into his room, had thought other thoughts, and drawn far different conclusions from the warnings of Divine Providence. Many unobserved moments of the day he had devoted to maturing plans for the evening, and preparing to put them into action. No time, in truth, was to be lost by him: he saw ruin before his eyes; but believed he might yet, by adroit management, either obtain an equivalent from James Stuart himself for what he must then lose, or prevent the loss itself. He calculated upon the force of the confessor's agency, and felt assured that the latter would not dare his share of disgrace by the exposure Dunbar could threaten him with, of his designs upon the established hierarchy of England. To go direct, then, to Windsor, a distance but of nineteen miles, was his fixed purpose.

Digitized by Google

By such a step he would ensure a free discussion of difficulties with his coadjutor, without the hazard of putting aught down upon paper, and be able to make conditions for his own benefit, in the event of an overthrow. Two other objects he might reach also: he might be in time to bribe and tutor Mansell, and in time to get Lord Woodvill privately put out of the way for an indefinite period. Thus the catastrophe might be warded off until he had secured, from the temporary return of his uncle's confidence, the coveted heirship and the noble match in prospect for him. Frank Hollis's statement of what passed between Mansell and himself, had been so full as to comprehend the information of where he was to have met Mansell with whatever letter he brought from Windsor. Thus Colonel Trevanion knew exactly where to find the man; whose steady falsehood in his service he relied upon, by way of equivalent for the mischief done him, and from the fellow's hope of future advantage. Knowing this haunt of Mansell's, and deeming it probable that he was there now, waiting Hollis, he resolved first to go in search of him, then proceed to Windsor upon a swift

Digitized by Google

horse, which his own unworthy habits taught him where to hire at any hour of the day or night; and so, giving an hour to conference with Peters, made sure of being back, upon a fresh horse, long before the late dawn of a January morning.

Luckily for him, he thought, he had honourable fools to deal with; so that once pledged to be found in the house, and once withdrawn for the night, he knew himself secure from molestation or surveillance. Merely waiting until he believed, from certain tokens, that all within the house were gone to their chambers, he cautiously unbarred the fastenings of his single window, and having previously changed parts of his apparel for a suit less costly and cumbersome, girded on his stoutest weapon, and descending from the balcony of the window, a few feet, stood upon a wall, which backed the house from a slip of unoccupied ground, then known by the name of Kemp's Field, where the church of St. Ann's now stands. From this station he was able to close the shutters, at a long stretch, so as to give them the appearance of being fastened within; and assuring himself that no one was within sight, dropped, without more

Digitized by Google

damage than a sound shaking of every joint, upon the frosty ground. As he fancied the detection which must have followed, or the suspicion excited, had there been snow there, he dared to say, "Thanks to my guardian angel!"

To remove himself as quickly as possible from becoming a marked object, he left the field with great speed, and got into the streets leading away from Soho; his object being to reach the quarter of St. James's. As he sped along, his slouched hat, folded cloak, mien and step, excited no other idea in the few persons who passed him, than that he was some court gallant hastening to an assignation. He was proceeding down Hedge Lane when, at one of its openings, he caught sight of a figure which he believed was that of Frank Hollis, coming up by another way, evidently on the return home from some late business of his own or his master's. The mere idea was sufficient to fire Colonel Trevanion with irritating imaginations and devilish hopes of vengeance. His direst enemy seemed at once delivered into his hands: it was an opportunity he could not resist; and gliding down the opening which his victim had

Digitized by Google

just passed, got in what sailors call the wake of their prize, without being seen or heard by him he followed. Nothing could be less in character with Dunbar Trevanion's ordinary self, than this intemperate thirst for revenge — it put every thing at hazard with him: but even the devil himself, seems to enjoy the overthrow of his best servant at certain times; and this was one, upon which it may be supposed he purposed deserting his votary.

Colonel Trevanion having distinctly ascertained that it was Hollis, and unarmed, except with a common walking-staff, tightened his cloak round his face, and, at well-calculated distance, pursued him alternately through two irregular streets, until they reached a sort of mews belonging to some absent nobleman's residence, which being open, Hollis entered as a shorter cut to his home.

Now was the lucky, or unlucky moment! without drawing breath, or giving the least Warning to the unconscious victim before him, Colonel Trevanion swiftly unsheathed his rapier, and made a desperate lunge at Hollis, whose body it must have passed through, had not the latter, by the help

Digitized by Google

of moonlight, seen, as in a glass, the shadow of his follower's figure and action upon the paved path they were treading; and, starting aside, avoided the mortal thrust.

To face round, recognise Colonel Trevanion, challenge him in no courteous terms, and strive to ward off another and another desperate attack with his staff, were things of an instant. Colonel Trevanion was now, indeed, desperate; and reckless of discovery by one whom he determined to despatch, as the shortest way of ridding himself of one witness against him, pressed on, with fury in his voice and gestures.

Hollis defended himself manfully and nobly, for he called out to his master's nephew to be merciful to his own soul; warning him, that if too closely pressed, he must, in self-defence, take the assailant's life. Without answering him, the colonel made a rapid and sure thrust at his innocent antagonist, who exclaiming, "Bear witness! for my life!" hastily discharged a pistol which he had drawn from his girdle. The aim was surer than poor Hollis desired, for Dunbar dropped on the instant, with a frightful groan: — he, too, gazed but a moment on the fallen man, then fell

Digitized by Google

himself, weltering in blood, at the feet of a grave looking personage whom he had last apostrophised.

"Blessed Mary! plead for that dying soul!" exclaimed this person as Colonel Trevanion fell. Hollis had not lost sense, though severely wounded and bleeding profusely, and from the words of this adjuration, he knew the speaker must be a papist. Little, then, did he hope, from the witness he had called upon. The stranger, however, busied himself in attempting to succour that one of the two wounded persons who seemed in the most extremity, and as Colonel Trevanion groaned again, with mental and bodily agony, ejaculated, "Help is at hand, sir. — Young man," here he addressed Hollis, "what had you done to this gentleman to provoke him to this? I saw the last sad action."

"Nothing, nothing," faintly repeated Hollis, "that I cannot answer for to God and man: and for this slaughter — it was in mine own defence; but you are no witness for a protestant man: — you are a papist." He turned away his face, with a feeling of aversion towards all of a religion to which Colonel Trevanion's confidants belonged.

Digitized by Google

"Call me what you will, brother!" returned the priest, for such he was, "I serve the same Master that you do; and, in his name, am ready to witness that you fired in self defence: what provocation you gave, remains between you and your conscience. But you bleed fearfully, too!—this dying man!—Oh, quick, quick, sirs!" and, starting on his feet, he called aloud to one or two persons who were seen advancing with lights. They proved to be persons of his own party, coming, as he was doing, from a funeral mass at the French ambassador's chapel. They gathered round the fallen combatants, proffering service, and enquiring where they should bestow them. Hollis had still breath enough to mention the place of his master's residence, and name his victim.

"Holy mother!" ejaculated the priest, in an accent of dismay.

"You know him, then?" interrogated Hollis, momentarily quickened by this imagined evidence of Dunbar's guilt.

"Indeed, indeed I do," was the sorrowful answer: "a liberal and kind gentleman! He was to marry father John's meek young convert."

Digitized by Google

At those words Colonel Trevanion, who was just lifted from the crimsoned spot whereon he lay, raised his head a little from the shoulder of him that supported it, and gave the priest a look as dark and devilish as his feelings. When it fell upon the sad and serious brow of the priest, the latter recoiled and crossed himself, ejaculating some words which Hollis neither heard nor heeded. The distressed young man was now humanely occupied with his anxiety to have Colonel Trevanion carried home whilst yet some life remained in him, that surgical aid might be procured, and some chance left for his late repentance. Of his own wound he thought little, nor of his own safety in another way; for, at the kindly suggestion of the priest, who proclaimed himself a chaplain of Prince d'Este's, he consented to let himself and his fallen companion be conveyed to the hotel of the prince, being much nearer than Sir Fulk Trevanion's house; yet refused to take advantage of the protection it might afford him for a time, from the inquisition of the law.

Thither, then, Colonel Trevanion was slowly borne between two young men,

Digitized by Google

whilst Hollis, whose wound was temporarily stanched, walked, or rather staggered after them, supported by the *pádrè*, with no small hazard to the latter, whose garb proclaimed his calling; and whom, not even the repeated assurance of Hollis, that he himself, who spoke to them, was the innocent doer of the bloody work, could preserve from occasional outrage.

Not many persons were about in the streets; but such as were, suspended their own business to swell the tumultuous throng which, by degrees, gathered by way of escort to the dark procession, doing disgrace to one religion, by causelessly reviling the minister of another. By the time they reached the door of Prince d'Este's hotel, one of the watch had obtained a proper officer, who entered with them at Hollis's request, and to whose custody he considered himself given up, although little likely soon to be in a state for removal. Sir Fulk Trevanion having been summoned, Hollis further refused to submit his own wound to probing, until he should have given account to his master of how his nephew came by his untimely death. The young man went, therefore, assisted

Digitized by Google

by a servant, into the chamber whither Colonel Trevanion was carried, and to which Prince d'Este, himself, hastened, on the first intimation of what was going on in his house. Scarcely noting the noble Italian's presence, Hollis remained watching the progress, and waiting the report of the surgeons, employed in extracting the ball; and when he heard the fatal decision pronounced, which proclaimed him not a willful murderer, but the unfortunate slayer of a fellow-creature whom he would gladly have spared, his grief and horror amounted to agony.

Under the distress of such a conviction, Sir Fulk Trevanion, in yet greater trouble and amazement of mind, found his honest servant supplicating the man he had wounded, to say he forgave as he hoped to be forgiven. No answer, either by word or sign from Colonel Trevanion, gave token that he heeded the petition; although the surgeons, in pronouncing the wound mortal, agreed that if the sufferer were inclined to speak, he must have the ability. The knight of Treverderet then approached close to the bed where his nephew lay in obstinate silence, and, with locked hands and

Digitized by Google

lifted eyes, besought him to say if he were wronged in the smallest particular by him or any man. Still Dunbar replied not — in vain the Romish priest, protestant divine, pitying strangers, and his relenting uncle, adjured him to reply to their separate questions: he lay, resolute to die as he had lived; darkly apart in soul from all that would have sought his confidence for his own good. Those about his bed continued long watching the spasmodic action of his features, and hearkening to his incessant groans: such slight relief the tortured man allowed himself; since the groan of mental misery might pass for that of mere bodily anguish. Frank Hollis, gradually growing whiter and feebler from suppressed suffering, still stood alternately clasping his hand in piteous entreaty, or wiping off with them the drops of pain and distress from his forehead. He now gazed with horror upon the rapidly changing countenance before him; ejaculating a fervent hope that the spirit within, which caused those dreadful throes, was labouring with a saving remorse. At his voice Colonel Trevanion's eyelids opened suddenly as by a spring; the wild and

Digitized by Google

blood-shot balls they disclosed, glared horribly upon Hollis; then glanced upon the figure of Sir Fulk; and closed again.

In that terrible silence, look, action, life ceased. The soul was gone to its account!

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IX.

THE awful death of Colonel Trevanion produced different effects upon the persons most concerned: Frank Hollis was so horror-struck, that the blood began to pour from his bandaged wound as from a well-head, with a force which threatened to drain every vein in his body. It was, however, stanched at last; and he was conveyed to bed under the charge of Father Hieronymus, by whose testimony, mainly, he was relieved from the danger of a committal to prison.

Sir Fulk Trevanion was in a manner stunned; and had difficulty, at the expiration of an hour, in giving distinct answers to such authorized persons as were speedily summoned to take cognizance of what was passing in the house of a foreigner, who was, from that very name, more obnoxious to suspicion, lest he were screening offenders against the law of the land.

To satisfy these legal enquirers it was only needful for Sir Fulk to state the mere

Digitized by Google

facts that had just preceded this unhappy business, without explaining the nature of his nephew's unfair dealing against himself: what he said, made it evident, that Hollis had exposed himself, in the performance of an act of duty, to the hatred of Colonel Trevanion; so that the colonel's having privately withdrawn himself from the house where he was pledged to remain, seemed to prove that he had done it with the purpose of taking vengeance upon Hollis, who could not fairly be suspected of any offensive project, since he was out by his master's orders. That the attack was made by the deceased, the Italian priest (whose testimony, from his prepossession in the colonel's favour, could not be doubted) proved beyond question: numbers of the crowd that had finally collected were ready to depone, also, that Hollis, so far from attempting flight, had shown himself solely anxious to succour the man he had wounded; and was the first to insist upon having the officers of justice sent for. Thus no grounds were left for reasonable doubt of the poor fellow's freedom from intentional guilt; and only the formality of a brief trial or examination, when he might be supposed

Digitized by Google

able to go through it, was spoken of by the law officers there.

This proceeding over, and reassured by the surgeons on the subject of Hollis's eventual recovery, the yet amazed knight of Treverderet endeavoured to express his acknowledgments to Prince d'Este ere he returned home, to tell his daughter what had roused him from his bed in the dead of night, and to search for his nephew's papers.

The prince met his somewhat reserved thanks, with that frank observation of them which at once led to better knowledge of each other. Sir Fulk soon saw that he had to deal with a man of honour and principle, one incapable of being swerved by favour or affection from the open and straight path; and as the prince claimed a sort of right to understand clearly what double dealing was suspected or proved upon a minister of his religion, a counsellor of his august relation's too, Sir Fulk believed it best to accept his offer of fathoming the affair upon condition of being fully told with what the king's confessor was charged.

So much was already known of the Trevanion history, and so much more was sure to become the town's talk, whenever the

Digitized by Google

catastrophe which had just occurred should be bruited abroad, that it did not require a great effort in Sir Fulk to overcome his repugnance to intimate converse now upon this delicate subject: he was even pleased to bring thus, his first charge against a creature of the court to one of the highest personages there; and, before that personage, to declare his resolution of directly divesting himself of his post under the crown, and retiring to independence and the honourable poverty from which he had been insidiously drawn.

He did not speak to one incapable of understanding and relishing the highest strain of lofty feeling, nor yet to one less alive than himself to all that degrades and disgraces another; but the prince, brought up in courts, was practised in the government of his looks and expressions, as well as that of his passions: he listened gravely and intently; his mind seemed to sit in judgment upon what it heard, without suffering the emotions of surprise, indignation, and generous ardour to disturb its attention. When Sir Fulk concluded his brief summary of the circumstances which had caused his alienation from his son, and afforded

Digitized by Google

Colonel Trevanion so many facilities for obtaining the inheritance of Treverderet, the prince pondered some time before he assured him that, if he would confide the matter to his honest stewardship, he would engage for bringing back a good account of it: he would engage for the king's acceptance of reasonable evidence, even short of law proofs, to justify him in cancelling the hasty proclamation of outlawry against Mr. Trevanion; and, further than that, he would procure from the king the letter which contained the precise statement of Mr. Trevanion's marriage, that its validity might be examined closer into.

In return for these services, however, Isidore d'Este had his own requests to prefer: he was desirous of sparing so great a scandal to his church as that of public exposure to two of its most noted members; and he certainly knew that of the monarch, and suspected that of his confessor, which, if made public, would not only bring merited infamy upon both, but kindle anew the sparks of rebellion, and light up a religious war over the country. Well was the prince aware that the sovereign, whom Sir Fulk Trevanion believed duped as he

Digitized by Google

had been, knew almost to a certainty that Mr. Trevanion had neither been in, nor aided Monmouth's attempts against the throne. In the presence of James, of his queen, and this his virtuous kinsman, the unhappy Monmouth, when pleading vainly for his life, had generously ended by clearing several innocent persons from all suspicion of being a party to his rebellion: amongst this number, the son of Sir Fulk Trevanion was included; and D'Este well remembered it: but he could not recollect aught additional concerning that gentleman; for the gentle queen's agony was so great, that he was obliged to carry her from the apartment, and returned only to find the princely suppliant gone. His own share in the deceit practised afterwards, was fraudulently as plausibly obtained. Both the king and the confessor stated their conviction that Monmouth's dying testimony was not to be trusted: they hinted at extraordinary reasons for that conviction; spoke with commendable horror of civil commotion; and showed what mischiefs might ensue, were known incendiaries to be readmitted upon slight evidence. Many of the persons named by the Duke of

Digitized by Google

Monmouth were exactly such as it would be prudent to keep out of the realm by a rigorous enforcement of the enactments against them, until time were allowed for a leisurely and strict examination into their guilt or innocence. Thus, with the specious plea of desiring to save an effusion of blood, and with a solemn declaration of his master's purpose to do justice eventually, Father Peters had won from the Prince d'Este the promise required; trusting that the prince's speedy departure from England would carry away their minor tormentor.

After hearing what he now heard, a less upright mind than that of d'Este would have suspected James Stuart's collusion with the jesuit; throughout every step of this nefarious scheme for gratifying the former's desire of vengeance upon an early opposer of his aggrandizement; but Prince Isidore was incapable of imagining aught so vile, of one educated in ennobling habits; and he rather ascribed the king's dissembling anxiety of doubt, after Monmouth's enumeration of names unjustly blackened, less to wilful fraud, than to that miserable weakness of head and principle which renders one man the ready tool of another.

Digitized by Google

Feeling confident that Peters must have played upon his master in some very important matter, as Colonel Trevanion's letter implied, d'Este was resolved not only to threaten him with exposure of that insolent jesuit, but to fulfil his trust, and drive him from the councils of the offended monarch. Still, however, he was unwilling to inflict needless wounds; and believed that if he could effect this, without inflaming the public mind to dangerous resentments against the existing government, he would be doing a service to humanity. He made no hesitation in confessing thus much to Sir Fulk Trevanion; with the franker addition of his being further incited to it, by regard to that church of which he avowed himself a sincere disciple; and the present head of which, he was justified in saying, sanctioned no crooked ways to right objects. If the knight could positively bring it home to Father Peters, either by Mansell's examination, or papers left behind by Colonel Trevanion, that he was the colonel's correspondent, then d'Este engaged to have the confessor sent, without noise, out of the kingdom. But to do this he must have undeniable proofs of the fact, so as to prove

Digitized by Google

how vilely the monk had been practised upon. Meanwhile he offered himself to carry straight to the king, whatever testimonials to Mr. Trevanion's absence from the late rebellion Sir Fulk might obtain from Lord Woodvill; so that his attainder might be taken off, and the way open to him for returning to disprove, if that were possible, the direct statement of his marriage with a daughter of Monmouth.

Prince Isidore had sufficient experience of some false natures to give him a quickness of suspicion, foreign otherwise to his noble disposition; and being unable to recollect a single expression of Monmouth's, which assorted with the idea of such a close connection as was imagined between him and Mr. Trevanion, he wished to probe that matter further; therefore resolved to allow no time for artifice to prepare new deceptions, but meditated speeding instantly to the king, after he should have met Lord Woodvill at Sir Fulk Trevanion's early on the coming day. To his house Woodvill had already been invited by the knight, in a note of which poor Hollis had been the bearer on the night previous, when he was met by Colonel Trevanion; and although

Digitized by Google

personally unknown to each other, Isidore d'Este did not fear to enter into the same benevolent business, with a nobleman to whom he had lately heard Eveleen Hungerford was engaged.

Sir Fulk Trevanion hastened home, but not for rest of any kind; the remaining period of night was divided between care of his daughter (whom the terrible death of her cousin threw into a horror which threatened delirium), and searching for what he was not to find, amongst his nephew's papers. No document of the slightest consequence was discovered; so that Sir Fulk was obliged to imagine the fact, that his nephew, ever on his guard against suspicion or accident, had destroyed every letter of moment, soon after its receipt.

Thus no proof whatever could be obtained of the colonel's correspondent being Father Peters; and, without that, the knight had no warrant for legal steps against him. He had, it is true, sufficient ground for threatening him with popular odium, and, through him, casting a stigma upon his party; but unless he could bring the matter home to him, it would be vain to think of a public exposure, and as vain

Digitized by Google

to fancy his royal master would give him up.

Even Mansell's examination, when he came hovering about the house the next morning to get sight of Hollis, and hear what message he brought from Windsor, did not much assist those who began to feel some painful misgivings of their own swift judgments. The man could only repeat what he knew, and what conjectured; his deposition simply testifying, that he was in the habit of giving his packets into the hands of Lady Dorchester's gentlewoman, from whom he received the answers. Of kings or confessors he professed to know nothing. Now, as it would be easy for her employers to put a direct falsehood into this girl's mouth, or to get her away beyond the reach of examination, it seemed best to let the whole business be managed privately: a mode of proceeding which, wearing the aspect of a grace to the great personage whose confidential agent was accused, might probably ensure the latter's confession, together with a fuller compensation of the wrongs done by him; and, what was of vital importance, satisfy the kindred of Colonel Trevanion that he had not been stigmatised unjustly

Digitized by Google

It was under such impressions, and deeply affected by the awful circumstances surrounding them, that Prince d'Este and Lord Woodvill met at the house of Sir Fulk Trevanion. There was little time for the interchange of courtesies, or for mutual scrutiny: happily the calm dignity of the one, and the vivid distinctness with which the other's character was written on his countenance, made scrutiny less necessary; and in half an hour they were conversing as friends do, freely and fully. Sir Fulk himself was greatly agitated; for each of those kind assistants suggested hopes of removing the main obstacle to a reunion between father and son. Lord Woodvill cheerfully maintained the truth of his story concerning Mr. Trevanion's marriage; conjecturing, therefore, that in the Duke of Monmouth's letter to Fletcher of Saltoun, the contrary statement must either have been written from a humour of the duke, to lead others astray out of mere sport, or in more serious endeavour to divert suspicion from its true guess. He took Monmouth's hasty visit to Argyll in Holland, only as a proof of his knowledge that a great secret was then at hazard; and although Sir Fulk

Digitized by Google

Trevanion despondingly dwelt on that visit, as a witness of the duke's right to allow of the disguised lady's marriage, Woodvill was not to be dispirited. Nor did he quit the subject, until he had obtained from the knight an avowal of the joy with which he would now accept as daughter-in-law, the niece of a nobleman whose principles were every day becoming more and more the objects of respect. At any rate, satisfaction of that, and every other particular concerning Mr. Trevanion, would soon be attainable. All that Colonel Trevanion had hitherto brought his uncle into avoiding, it was the joint counsel of his present advisers to urge him into seeking — thus a single application from himself to any of Argyll's scattered family abroad, or even to the Catalonian nobleman, who was said to have invited Mr. Trevanion into Spain, would be sure of eliciting the truth. Unhappily, Mr. Fletcher, to whom the letter in question had been written, was lost to his friends — never having yet been heard of, since the unfortunate and fatal quarrel, which had banished him from the camp of Monmouth ere the fight of Sedgemoor; however, his reappearance hereafter was

Digitized by Google

to be reckoned upon; and Prince d'Este, meanwhile, promised to seek possession of the important letter, that its validity might be investigated.

With many testimonials, then in his hand, to establish the truth of what he had himself heard Monmouth solemnly declare, the noble Italian went on his commission; ordinary decorums forbade the knight of Treverderet from stirring personally in any worldly business at this juncture; so that he resolved to take the present moment for conveying his daughter to her friends in Sussex; leaving Lord Woodvill, by the latter's generous wish, charged with the performance of the last Christian duties, to the remains of a most unchristian man; and Mr. Becket, self-devoted to the darling object of his mechanical operations, the recognition of his patron as Lord Chas-cawen.

Prince d'Este went straight to Windsor, but not to tax the king, as he had first purposed, with unworthy double dealing towards himself: he felt the impolicy of driving shame into its last refuge, a braving of merited infamy; and knowing that if it were, indeed, Argyll's niece to whom

Digitized by Google

Mr. Trevanion had allied himself, the attainder of that nobleman's blood would bar the return of her and her children; he saw that he must act with delicacy towards the king, or lose the right of asking the only grace which, not granted, would neutralize every other acquisition.

The full confusion of detection, therefore, and the utmost severity of rebuke, he meant to deal out to Father Peters; hoping so to elicit from him that of which there was, unhappily, no positive proof, left behind Colonel Trevanion. Ere the news from London could have reached the castle, d'Este presented himself, unannounced, in the apartments of the confessor. The tidings he brought, the letter he held open in his hand, the testimonials he produced from Lord Woodvill to Mr. Trevanion's clearance, the indignant mention he made of the confessor's insidious attempt to engraft his concealed proselyte upon a family avowedly protestant, all this needed not the prince's additional assertion that he was pledged, for the honour of his abused religion, to see justice done to persons of the apostate church, though at the expense of a minister of his own. Peters was so driven

Digitized by Google

from himself by the shock of his coadjutor's death, and by the prince's determined manner, that believing all the past revealed to him, in the haste of justifying his share of the plots thus brought to light, he unwarily admitted the fact of his correspondence with Colonel Trevanion; and from that instant the prince had him in his power.

In vain the haughty priest endeavoured to defend himself, by refusing an answer to questions put by his Highness of Este, concerning affairs of a British subject, of whose case a foreigner, he said, could not be considered a fair judge. The prince replied that, waving that stranger's concerns, he was there to obtain satisfaction from the priest for the indignity put upon himself, in making him abet an act of iniquitous fraud, when it must have been notorious to the prompter that every plea he set up, to induce the prince's compliance, was false; Mr. Trevanion being neither in Monmouth's rebellion, nor so much as suspected of it long before the duke's testimony to that effect, nor entering into any cabal abroad.

Peters now took a firm station, upon the paramount duty of every true son of their

Digitized by Google

church to maintain and extend its empire to the utmost of his ability: arguing for the lawfulness of every temporal measure which was resorted to for the sake of rescuing souls from eternal perdition; and destroying the bodies, or worldly influence, of such as, being obstinate in error, were likely to draw others after them. He quoted fathers, councils, consistories, bulls, indulgences, in support of his pernicious doctrine: he brought what were called great examples, to prove how often it had been publicly and privately acted upon; and he boldly exhorted Prince d'Este to beware how he drew to himself the suspicion of countenancing innovating speculations, and the enemies of their religion.

"Your examples move me not," was the prince's answer. "I know there was a Judas amongst the elected twelve; what wonder, then, that a Judas sometimes sits in the chair of St. Peter, and in lesser chairs? All that I find evil in our holy institutions, I refer to one of these betrayers of their Master."

"Sir, the religion I was taught," returned the confessor, with a look that was meant to awe his princely auditor, "ad-

Digitized by Google

mits not the right of private judgment in the smallest particular. Whenever the interests of our infallible church are concerned, I bow to its supreme head. I have not acted without warrant on the present occasion: and am prepared to give account to my spiritual superiors of the stewardship you please not to approve."

"When I can find a warrant in the precepts of our Master, and the example of his immediate disciples, either for speaking or acting a lie," returned d'Este, severely, "then will I admit that they are justified who would advance the truth by falsehood: shame, shame, father, to those who cast the leprosy of their own natures upon the spotless One!" He paused, indignantly, then added, less vehemently, yet with equal firmness, "Since such are your avowed principles, it becomes my duty to show his majesty how he hath been made to enter into one of the foulest plots against an innocent man that ever was practised. You, sir, ought to know, and it was your business to teach the king so, that if our holy religion may only be upheld by devilish arts, it is a device of Satan's; and neither his arm, nor your serpent tongue, nor all

Digitized by Google

Christendom in league, can keep it from falling. I am one that believe it founded upon a rock: such ministers as you, but the foul weeds dashing over it! clinging to it, if you will!"

With this contemptuous expression of his sentiments Prince d'Este would have departed, had not the jesuit arrested his steps, by saying, boldly, "Have a care, prince, that you speak not dangerous things; unlawful to hear without repeating. You seem unaware that the opinions you are broaching here, savour of rank heresy, and may bring your ghostly director into sharp question at Rome. In all brotherly love, I would apprize you that the soundness of Father Hieronymus hath been long suspected; and this free-thinking on the part of his scholar——"

"Shall be answered for by the scholar," interrupted the prince, disdaining the insinuated threat; "and the teacher's seventy years of apostolical labours, apostolical charity, may answer for him. But do you take heed to yourself, Father Peters! sheep may be forced out of a fold when its once wholesome herbage turns to poison. They must be wary who would undertake to con-

Digitized by Google

vince my ripened understanding, that such doctrines as you avow and put into action, are truly those of our church. Do you profess to cast out the devil of unbelief by the devil of fraud? But our supreme head shall know you for what you are: a corrupter of sound doctrine and discipline, a teacher of iniquity, a pander to vice, instead of its monitor. Witness your league with the king's mistress, and with the humbler lover of that mistress: witness your false aggravations of a father's resentment against a son ——"

"To advance the interests of true religion," Peters broke in undauntedly.

"To advance yourself!" repeated the frowning prince. "Ambition — no, on my soul, I now think you too vile for that half-angel passion! your appetites are lower: human blood, human groans you delight in. And dare you say you have a warrant for this from the Christian head of our church now ruling it?"

Peters's livid aspect grew more livid as he replied, somewhat hastily, "What if I bring my warrant from a temporal head, which I could not withstand or gainsay? What if I can prove that the boldest of these

Digitized by Google

lawful deceits your highness reprobates was planned and perfected by that august person, and I but acted by his commandment?"

At this insinuation against the sovereign of England, Prince d'Este uttered a vehement and scornful expression of entire disbelief in its truth.

The confessor, however, was not to be dismayed, and he said, in no tone of deference, "It is not wise to force a man into self-defence: I will not be branded singly. You reckon unsafely upon this sentence (pointing to one in Dunbar's letters), for charging the treason upon me, of hoodwinking his majesty. I tell your highness, my honoured liege knew well, what it sorted better with his dignity to let this third person fancy him witless of. Disgrace me publicly, and England may see worse than the tragedy of 1649 — the queen's meek head may be claimed along with her royal consort's."

"The queen's!" repeated d'Este, losing the sedate severity of his aspect. "She is incapable of advancing our blessed faith by any unfair means."

"I do not say her majesty hath had a

Digitized by Google

part in our justifiable precautioning," returned the subtle jesuit; "but these heretical English are ever ready to catch at every suspicious matter against those of the true religion: and, as they have already reported falsely of her, that she did insult the last agonies of the rebel Monmouth, they will, perchance, think that only Italian policy could have thought of making these lines to witness false things."

Prince d'Este repelled this seeming insinuation against his virtuous kinswoman; and would again have expressed his utter disbelief of inventive villainy in her august husband; but the jesuit silenced him, by unlocking a drawer, and taking thence a bundle of papers. "Please you to look on these two sheets, my prince!" said Peters, "read in continuance, they unsay what, read separately, they affirm. By the simple operation of dividing them, and presenting only the second to Sir Fulk Trevanion, my royal master's own sagacity——"

D'Este's indignant action of catching and crushing the papers in his hand, stopped the offensive conclusion. His eye had taken in too much of their import, not to require an immediate sight of a memoran-

Digitized by Google

dum in James Stuart's writing, to stay him from the bitterest denunciation against so foul a minister as the man he had hoped was the sole actor of such iniquity. James's memorandum contained a full allusion to the matter, showing his concurrence with it at least. Monmouth's letter presented, at the bottom of one sheet, these lines: — "Further, I have to tell you, that there is no truth in the whisper, that"—the uniting words were at the top of the other sheet, and might well be read for the commencement of a subject — "Mr. Trevanion, the knight of Treverderet's son, hath married my daughter, by Lady Harriet."

It was now the jesuit's turn to take the vantage ground; and although Isidore d'Este maintained resolutely the main purpose of his visit, he was obliged to yield several lesser points. He agreed to refrain from exacting the exclusion of Peters from the councils of a monarch whom, in truth, d'Este now saw needed no counsel to most disingenuous actions. He bound himself to what the other secretly believed he should easily elude, an application for private censure and admonition from the supreme pontiff, to both master and servant.

Digitized by Google

Peters, on his part, engaged to secure not only his majesty's immediate sanction of the measures taking by Mr. Trevanion's friends for his clearance, but the sovereign's gracious acceptance and recommendation to his privy council of incomplete evidence to that effect: since, in truth, the evidence must be inconclusive which did not prove what lawyers call an *alibi*. He undertook himself to manage the delicate business of undeceiving Sir Fulk Trevanion concerning his son's marriage: the prince refusing to have any share in a transaction which, if he mentioned at all, he could not do without abhorrence, much less in the simulating way hinted by Peters, of being rather the effect of carelessness than design. Had d'Este guessed, however, that after all, the cowardly agent meant to charge a dead associate with the foul contrivance, his noble nature would have deemed it virtue, rather to give up the dearest kinsman he had to deserved obloquy, than suffer such injustice. But incapable of imagining such iniquity, and eager to escape from the painful view of artifices already made manifest to him, he tasked Peters to the immediate performance of what he promised, and left his presence.

Digitized by Google

The mortified confessor's task of driving the mulish James back from the road whereon he had so lately been spurred to go, would have been most arduous, had he not been aided by certain private knowledge, in his hope of inducing him to such retrograde action.

The revocation of the edict of Nantes was already known throughout Europe, and its consequences partly anticipated; but only a few influential devotees knew that civil war had already broken out in the Lower Cevennes, and that it was the horrid purpose of Louis, and the gloomy bigots into whose hands he now committed his kingdom and his conscience, to exterminate protestanism at any cost of blood and national prosperity.

No sooner was the protecting edict revoked, than every aggression on the part of the popish inhabitants of the protestant provinces was sanctioned and encouraged. Blind zeal and private animosity found the same avenues open to them, for the gratification of their separate desires. It became lawful to force protestants out of their churches; lawful to force them into the worship of the virgin and the saints. Chil-

Digitized by Google

dren were torn from the breasts of their mothers, — brides ravished from the altar or the arms of their husbands, that they might become the wives of catholic lovers, or be shut up in convents :—aged persons were staked or burned for the sake of striking a salutary horror into the young, whom their courageous example encouraged in abiding firm to the purified religion ; — whilst sons and grandsons were butchered in their efforts to release their hoary-headed sires and ministers, from the death-fire, or the wheel. The unhappy people of that once peaceful and protected country, the mountainous Cevennes, driven to such havoc of their homes and their hearts, and attacked on their very hearths even in their family worship, had now taken up defensive weapons ; and, at that war-signal, a crusade against them, was about to be preached. James and his creatures knew, from secret correspondence between the two courts, that the people of the Cevennes were in a state of revolt, and that the best troops of France were marching to invest them, as they would a beleaguered city. Thus girded round by an army selected for the work of bloody persecution, the poor

Digitized by Google

inhabitants of those mountains might maintain a hard struggle for a time, but were rendered incapable of receiving communications or succour from other countries. Any individual dwelling amongst them, therefore, must share their fate; or escape, by virtue of some claim to catholic protection. Mr. Trevanion was little likely to possess or seek such a privilege; and whether he had or had not enrolled himself amongst the defenders of an oppressed people, his abode there was sure to prove an iron cage to him. This consideration was Peters's sheet-anchor, when he went to break to his royal master the dark tidings of Dunbar Trevanion's death, and by his death of the failure of all their black policies. The arguments he essayed for immediately doing Sir Fulk Trevanion justice, were those of stern necessity; and as the jesuit carefully hid from the monarch his own bold confidence to Prince d'Este, the king believed himself safe from suspicion of purposely abusing the testimony of Monmouth's divided letter, and was not unwilling to take any shelter offered for his good name. Thus, affecting sorrow for past injustice, and pleasure at finding he had

Digitized by Google

acted severely through another's artifice, James empowered Peters to issue orders for the speedy reversal of Mr. Trevanion's attainder;— to invite that gentleman over sea to confirm his own innocence by fuller proofs than what his majesty graciously accepted now; and to give up his late-favoured instrument's memory, to all the odium which he and another amply deserved to share in.

After the first burst of wrath and mortification, these acts did not cost the king much effort. Peters could assure him of cordial assistance from the ministers of Louis XIV. for the detention, if not destruction of an individual obnoxious on account of his religious principles: so that, whilst the farce of a free entrance into his own country was performed and tendered to him, the protestant Englishman might be kept within an armed cordon, and hunted down at leisure. Little opposition to its threatened severities was expected by the court of France. Persecution utters, from a thousand brazen throats, as many false reasonings; whilst Christian charity has but one tongue and one argument. Numberless excellent persons of the Gallican church

Digitized by Google

pleaded for patience and pity to those they yet believed in a deadly error ; but fearing to maintain their hearts' pleadings, by appeals to that scripture which they were forbidden to interpret by itself, they withdrew in sad humility from the contest, with a sorrow available for their own sanctification, — useless to those for whom they grieved.

Thus the virtuous D'Auguesseau retired from his high office in Languedoc, when bade to enforce orders at which his justice and humanity revolted. Fenelon and Flechier weepingly besought mercy for those they deemed erring fellow-creatures, when the ministers of a free gospel would have commanded it, in His name who forbade all violence ; and such men as Bossuet were left armed with the double thunders of their own eloquence and the ordinances of their church, to fulminate her darkest doctrine — that princes acknowledging the papal authority have a right to enforce spiritual conformity amongst their subjects by the utmost severities exercised upon their properties and their lives.

Each and all of the just and generous Romanists would have stood as dauntlessly in the breach as our reformers did, and

Digitized by Google

given their bared breasts to the fire or sword in defence of the right, had they been firmly persuaded that it was the right. But, alas! what was to assure a conscientious disciple of a church which its members are bound to believe infallible, that their hearts did not melt with mere human weakness, and that it was not as much a duty to rise above that weakness, as to submit the body to fasts and scourgings, and the will to a divorce from those soft affections which lead to honourable marriage? Alas! that such Christians should remain blind to this truth, — that as God's laws are immutable, so does that church approach nearest to the heavenly pattern, about whose laws there is no question; which requires no suicide of the benevolent affections; which challenges free comparison of its creed and its discipline, with the institutions of the primitive Christians, and the page of scripture; and unlike the despotic spiritual rule of Rome, depends not upon the character of one individual human head for its being a law of love, or a principle of extermination.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. X.

INCAPABLE of imagining any such events as those related a few pages back, Eveleen Hungerford had been living under her uncle Lake's roof more than two weeks ere the most important of these occurred. She had been in time to enact the part of his almoner, or rather that of cordial welcomer to all who thronged the hall and court of Chichester House for Christmas gifts.

The memory of the preceding winter — the terrible winter of 1684-5, was in her heart and eyes when she held out food and clothing to wayfarers, as well as poor cottagers, and pointed to the piled fuel destined for their conveyance away. Light, warmth, and nourishment of another kind were bestowed largely at such a season by the good prelate himself. To some he gave books; to such as could not read he addressed a few touching and influential words upon the right rejoicing at the return of sacred festivals; and checking no impulse to gladness and gratefulness, merely sought to give

Digitized by Google

those feelings a higher direction than senseless merry-making, and pleasure at the removal of bodily wants. Almost immediately after entering under her uncle's roof, Eveleen was transformed anew into her former self. Black thoughts fled like shadows from brightening prospects; and hope, her happy spirit's natural guardian, returned to take her wonted station, to the expulsion of sad memories and sadder misgivings. Yet was there nothing in the episcopal residence which most young people would have relished highly. It was an unostentatious, commodious, and comfortable dwelling; and that was all. A simple yet plentiful table; a mere sufficiency of sober-suited attendants; doors never closed, except against hardened vice; abundant hospitality to such as most needed it; and nothing beyond a decent elegance in unavoidable entertainments of ceremony, proved the Bishop of Chichester's apostolic notion of church dignities. His retainers were young men at college, the sons of poor clergy, whom he was educating for whatever profession their talents and inclinations pointed to. His revenues were spent in the diffusion of Christian knowledge, and the

Digitized by Google

diffusion of Christian principles in the example he set of spending not upon himself.

Bountiful of his purse, sparing of his time, Bishop Lake rarely bestowed more of the last upon the many comers and goers to whom his chaplain or secretary paid the dues of hospitality, than was needful for their best interests, or for the despatch of the businesses which brought them. His prime hours were given to his highest duties; the later ones of each day, when his bodily powers rather than his spirit flagged, to the relaxation of intense thought, and the dear undress of fire-side talk, with his dearer companion.

To sit by her uncle's side, or at his feet, in the great oak parlour, curtained round from the shrill winds heard whistling through the arches of the long open passage or cloister, which runs along one part of Chichester House,—to draw nearer towards the blazing fire, and hear him read and comment upon some portion of whatever volume of history or of poetry lay on the cushioned elbow of his chair, was to Eveleen Hungerford a delight and a privilege. Sometimes she recited or sang antique ballads to him, without accompaniment, for

Digitized by Google

the bishop's tastes were all simple. Sometimes she questioned him reverentially upon the greatest subjects; or spoke of trifling things, with a charm that left them no longer trifling. At others they conversed of Lord Woodvill and the altered Villiers. Upon each and all of these subjects the bishop had ever a gracious word to say: indeed there never was a theme upon which his habitual humour threw not the light of Christian benevolence. To Eveleen this invariable habit, was like sitting under perpetual moonlight; and the garish day of livelier pleasures or interests, lost by the comparison.

In fact, to Eveleen one theme was peculiarly sweet: this may be guessed; since her venerable uncle divined it, and often introduced the name of Woodvill into their discourses; referring delightedly to their first rencontre with him, to all he heard from himself of his ripened qualities, and had long known from Mr. Somers's partial predictions of his godson: willing so, to deepen the impression which his penetrating eye saw Lord Woodvill had made upon her heart.

A day of continuous snow had closed, and

Digitized by Google

Eveleen, rejoicing in having got her uncle safely back from a long duty ride through the heavy fall, was rousing their welcoming fire, over which she and the bishop's cat had been watching together; when the tabby favourite's purring greeting of her master, and her own sweet chidings, were interrupted by the muffled sounds of carriage wheels through the snow, and the voice of the staid Mr. Stamford, as he was evidently leading his master's horse out of the way of unlooked-for visitors. A few moments afterwards the adventurous travellers were announced; Aura Trevanion was in the arms of her transported, amazed friend; glad tears were on their joined cheeks; and speechless joy was in one heart at least.

The bishop and his stranger guests were meeting in another apartment, leaving those two young hearts to flow into each other freely and fully.

Such a meeting, under such circumstances as Aura Trevanion and Eveleen met under now, may be imagined: Miss Trevanion had that to tell, which mixed up awe and horror with joy and wonder; and Eveleen, in listening to the danger which had threatened Lord Woodvill, from

Digitized by Google

Colonel Trevanion's enmity, felt the mere imagination of that possible evil sufficient to check immoderate delight in this restoration of her friend. But much and abiding joy there was in their reunion, and in the circumstances which led to it; and youthful spirits need but one glimpse of an elysium, however dim and distant, to spring forward on the track to it, with a feeling that is itself elysium.

Meanwhile Sir Fulk Trevanion was going through the abhorrent task, to one of his character, of confessing error: he had to ask the bishop's good offices with his niece for her forgiveness of his discourteous and unjust conduct; to explain the way by which he was brought into such offensive interpretation of her kindness to his daughter; and to state his doubtful hopes of the future as they regarded his son.

In doing this, much of the knight's old nature was temporarily revived: pride and habitual reserve struggled hard for the mastery over better feelings; and often did he seek to hide, even from his own sight, the criminal weakness or violence of his conduct. But, happily, he had to do with a

Digitized by Google

man whose original character once required similar taming; and who knowing, therefore, what would bear handling, and what must remain untouched, applied only such correctives to the mortified spirit as give little pain in present application, yet leave a salutary smarting for after time. This was not, in truth, the moment for preaching against committed faults: Bishop Lake sought only to put the tempest-tossed soul upon self-examination, by such remarks, gently spoken, as would of themselves throw light upon hidden motives and hoarded prejudices. The irritable owner of Treverderet already began to see that he had himself placed his eyes under the bandage of his nephew's arts; and, in the grasp of such a conviction, unwilling yet to look on it, his mind was thrown into powerful agitation, so that he walked the room long in silence, half repenting that he had spoken all he did. His reverend companion, by impulse kindly, by reflection humble, beheld him, meanwhile, as he would have done a poor infected person labouring under the disease from which he had just arisen; and, with a voice tuned by the most benevolent affections, sought to allay the

Digitized by Google

storm he had witnessed: the tone, the encouragements, did at last pour oil on the troubled wave, and it subsided.

In their unavoidable discourse about Lord Villiers, the prelate had an admirable opportunity of evincing his warm approbation of such as retrod their backward steps; contrasting their true magnanimity with that false nobleness which revolts from the imputation of fallibility. If he did not completely effect his object, nor render Sir Fulk deeply interested in the young lord's reformation, at least he convinced him, that with Christians, sincere repentance has all the value of unswerving rectitude.

Of the long-misguided Villiers, there was, indeed, much good to say. That blessed light, which Eveleen had been the first to see dawning, was even now strengthened and assuming steadiness; and when he fulfilled his promise to her, of calling on her uncle as he passed through Chichester, the bishop rejoiced to find the soil already prepared for his careful sowing: the precious seed was then scattered; it was left now for Heaven's breath to ripen.

That very snow which had deterred most travellers from prosecuting their journeys,

Digitized by Google

and so kept the inhabitants of Chichester House in ignorance of what was transacting in London, now proved no unpleasing bar to the intrusion of more visitors; so that the January evening closed, and the night was far gone into by the four persons, who finally drew round the smiling hearth at which only two had before been sitting. The exhaustless conjecturings of that evening's full conversation, made such of the small party, as had hitherto been strangers, well acquainted with each other's turn of mind; so that Sir Fulk Trevanion consented to remain with his daughter, under the bishop's roof, until he should know that the interment of his nephew was over, which Lord Woodvill had undertaken to see performed with the ordinary show of respect. Whilst his daughter sat opening her glad heart to every ray of present and prophesied joy, which her inspiring friend imparted in their mutual chamber, Sir Fulk walked in the old-fashioned garden of the episcopal residence, sometimes resisting, oftener meditating with advantage, the novel truths (to him) which it was ever the bishop's endeavour to mix with all subjects.

Digitized by Google

Thus was the extreme agitation of those expectant days beguiled and got over, until their suppressed hopes and fears and painful memories were ended by Lord Woodvill's and Prince d'Este's arrival.

They came bearers of the important news that the jesuit and the king having admitted the charges against Colonel Trevanion, asserting that he had deceived them as well as his trusting kinsman, the former was no longer able to oppose justice; and that, consequently, Mr. Trevanion was now invited over by royal proclamation to maintain his loyalty; private permission being also granted for his lady's return, whether Argyll's niece, or purely foreign.

At this supposition the agitated exclamation of Sir Fulk Trevanion hurried the most joyful fact, from the lips of Lord Woodvill, whose whole being seemed transported into light, when he burst forth with the joyful explanation. It was a perilous joy; for the speechless father fell back in his chair ere half the news was told: and so, perhaps, blessedly, balanced the heart of his feebler child, between agony and transport, too long for either to destroy her.

Digitized by Google

Such an unhoped-for providence, as this removal of their worst fear, was, indeed, too great for public receiving, and it soon drove both father and daughter away for the night, to mingle long, ere they slept, tears and thanksgiving, in tumultuous bursts of tenderness and gratitude; then to talk of the same dear object — the parent with bitter self-upbraidings, the child with sweet prophecies of a moment in which all sorrow would be swallowed up in joy.

Having whispered to Eveleen Hungerford that they would not return for supper, it was only on the morrow they met again the warm congratulations of Bishop Lake and his youthful niece. The all-awakened countenance of the latter, her eager movement, and fluttered breath, spoke more eloquently of transported sympathy than many tongues.

Sir Fulk Trevanion was ardent for speeding over himself to the continent, to recall his injured son; but, to this natural desire, Prince d'Este unwillingly opposed the fact, that it might rather delay their meeting, as the discontents, rumoured now in the country of the Cevennes, might, perhaps, already have urged Mr. Trevanion to quit

Digitized by Google

it; and that it would be wiser, therefore, to send letters of recall through various channels, and to those places, such as Brussels, Amsterdam, &c., where Mr. Trevanion was likely, in such case, to go. Offering to be the bearer of one of these; and, perhaps, to hurry off attention from the ominous nature of his objection to a father's natural desire, Prince d'Este claimed the parting good wishes of those present, announcing his intention of bidding adieu to England, where the late awful catastrophe had certainly detained him.

Not a heart, indeed, in that circle, but grieved that they might not keep him there. Even Woodvill, the generous Woodvill, forgot, for the while, his self-misgiving apprehensions upon his account: nor, in truth, could he find in Eveleen Hungerford's undisguised, yet tempered, words of regret, aught to justify a recurrence to Lady Rhoda Brandon's written insinuations. Whenever his own eye met hers, the quick blush "as though her veins ran lightning," made his pulses throb with that doubtful joy between conscious waking and an imagined dream, which it is so sweet to feel, so sweet to cause. They had thought of each other

Digitized by Google

so constantly since their last meeting, that a sort of intimacy had already established itself between them. Woodvill appeared to think himself privileged to hover round Eveleen with attentions devoted solely to her, exclusive of every other person; and she, unconsciously or willingly, raised her eyes to his, at every thing interesting or noble said in discourse, assuring herself of their sympathy in thought and feeling. Whether Prince d'Este noted this, and repined at it, Eveleen no longer conjectured: for his grave demeanour guarded his own secrets at all times, and now he spake but of serious themes. The bishop was pleased to discover that he was leaving England, the sooner because certain of his remonstrances to the king were overborne by rash fanatics; and, perhaps, the good prelate hoped such a spirit, once put upon steadily examining the principles in which he had been educated, might come to this conclusion, that those doctrines must be erroneous which would lead us to abjure the law of mercy and of love, written in man's heart, and God's book.

Lord Villiers was now added to the knot of friends, assembled to speak of Mr. Trevanion. He came by express in-

Digitized by Google

vitation from the bishop, who was ever alive to the utility of enlarging the sphere of beneficial acquaintance. Villiers's errand was not merely to receive the knight of Treverderet's thanks for his service to his daughter; but to say that as he was going instantly abroad, and wanted an object of some worth, he craved permission to be the bearer of letter or message from Sir Fulk Trevanion to his son, in the Cevennes, where he engaged to find either himself or a direction to him, in despite of possible obstacles.

The knight was long backward to accept the offer, though pressed with alternate respect and impetuosity by Villiers, in whom certainly only good purposes seemed to reawaken something of his naturally determined spirit. Sir Fulk's own nature yet kept fast hold upon himself; and his new views of high subjects were not yet sufficiently distinct, to permit of unreserved sympathy with another's convictions, supposing such convictions overturned, at once, old habits.

Something of unreasonable uneasiness was in his mind, as he noted his daughter's natural disorder of maidenly shame, and

Digitized by Google

genuine compassionateness, when she saw the changed Villiers enter; and something like doubt of his sincerity arose, as he observed his utterly neglected dress, and the expression of centered sadness which invariably returned to his features after momentary animation was over. Sir Fulk Trevanion believed it unlikely a court-gallant should so deeply mourn his wife; and was not quite aware that the mourning might be for wasted life and incurred guilt. Yet the once incomparably handsome Villiers bore all the marks of true indifference to ordinary pleasures and ambitions: he was interested in no conversation that had not connection with what employed his thoughts, or what he wished to be employed upon: his figure was wasted; the gloss and clustering of his peculiar hair changed into dull uniformity; the very colour of his dark blue eyes rendered less noticeable, from the want of that gem-like lustre which used to draw forth their rich hues as it shifted and sparkled over them.

So changed, Lord Villiers certainly did not offer much resemblance to Arundell Trevanion, and such likeness not detected by the knight, his feelings were not bribed

Digitized by Google

into that confidence towards the once offending lord which every one else testified. Villiers did not observe this: his spirit was busy within; holding up to his repentant view the characters and conduct of such men as Isidore d'Este and Lord Woodvill. He that looked, meanwhile, upon his humbled brow, and mistook it for hypocrisy, or contemned it as unmanliness, had yet to learn, that the warped heart must be broken, ere it melts and is re-cast.

When this small company broke finally up, parting for different destinations, the great revolution in the Trevanion family, which had its source in the discovery of Colonel Trevanion's villany, was evident to all men. The knight of Treverderet's right to the long-contested barony was promptly and officially recognised by the attorney-general: his previous resignation of the high Cornish office accepted, though reluctantly, by the sovereign, who saw in that, an alarming symptom of disaffection to his person. The faithful Hollis was openly acquitted of malicious purpose in the slaughter of his master's kinsman; the illustrious head of the family into which the colonel was to have married, having

Digitized by Google

been himself ignorant of his wife and daughter's conversion to popery, abandoned his expected son-in-law's memory to deserved opprobrium; and Arundell Trevanion, publicly cleared of one charge and privately of another, was free to re-enter his country, assured of a rapturous welcome at his home! Thus many and great were the blissful changes in possession and prospect for Aura Trevanion and her father. But no earthly joy comes Jove-like, arrayed in destroying splendours; some gracious and softening cloud is ever interposed, both to protect, and warn us, that the blaze is but for a season. Arundell was restored, then, to his father's heart, but not to his arms; and the barony was gained, but where was he whose race was to perpetuate it? and was not the new peer, the reconciled parent, again the straitened owner of dilapidated estates?

The only fruit which for awhile grew upon the barren tree of tardy triumph, was the extinction of animosity between Lord Carraton and his successful rival. To the former, the barony had ever been a mere bagatelle; and now that his sister's intemperate resentments had put the matter be-

Digitized by Google

yond doubt, he had sense enough to see the propriety of marking his displeasure at Lady Rhoda's concealment of such a document, by refusing to believe her falsehood concerning its late discovery; and he went, therefore, amongst the first to congratulate the new Lord Chas-cawen. So fell, eternally, the barriers between Treverderet and Rohesia.

To Treverderet, after the lapse of another week or two, returned the father and daughter: sometimes to find their brightest hopes expanded by the extravagant joy testified by the commonalty at the prospect of the expatriated Arundell's restoration; sometimes to droop over the fear that such happiness was more than they ought to anticipate; to live upon expectation, misgivings, fervent prayers, hourly reports, and letters from their friends.

Eveleen and her pious uncle had each their correspondent in Treverderet, whom they severally cheered, and invited to that trust which prepares the heart equally for submission or gratitude. Lord Woodvill wrote from London every authentic piece of news he could obtain; for he was now entering, heart and soul, into the councils

Digitized by Google

of those sound patriots who stood sentinels over the best interests of their country; and might not quit his post, even at the dear call of private affection. But no tidings were come of Philips; and of Lord Villiers nothing more had been heard, than that he was on the borders of the Cevennes country, resolved to enter it in spite of prohibitions or cordons.

The distracted state of these mountains was now known over all Europe; thousands of their timid inhabitants had already fled for shelter to peaceable countries, where their own creed was professed; whilst braver spirits remained in, or poured from other provinces into that asylum of the purified religion; believing themselves called upon to rally round the ark of their common faith, and preserve it from total destruction. Who can say that the fire and sword were ever used by protestant hands, to drive other Christians to their altars, or to exterminate them at their own?

The most sacred engagements of himself and his predecessors were broken by Louis XIV. when he revoked the edict of Nantes; and to that violation of justice, he added the persecution which has left, even amongst

Digitized by Google

us, its frightful memory, in the familiar phrase of "dragooning" individuals to acts against their will. Such insults to a righteous and almighty Ruler were speedily visited. A just Providence ordained, that far greater loss and disappointment should eventually spring from the *dragonnade* against the French protestants, to the spiritual dominion it was intended to extend, than it spread suffering amongst its victims. — Daily, hourly, vessels freighted with refugees from France, of all ages and conditions, were seen unloading their dismal freights at different ports of our hospitable island.

The wrongs, the miseries, the martyrdom of lives, properties, hopes, and worldly ambitions, which were thus brought directly under the eyes of James Stuart's subjects, taught them what they might expect, what they should abhor, what resist; and assuredly paved the way for a cordial reception of a protestant king, and a protestant national church, guaranteed by wise restrictions and generous toleration, in less than three years afterwards.

Something for the composure of the agitated minds at Treverderet was gained by

Digitized by Google

the arrival of the voluntary exiles from France. Lord Woodvill's activity speedily discovered among them a person who could speak largely of the beloved Englishman, as he was called in the Cevennes, and whilst he tasked his means to the utmost to assist some, and support others, he was recompensed by this discovery.

At Treverderet this Cevenoise found a warm welcome, and finally a settlement for herself and family. She stated, that she remembered well, when the noble foreign gentleman came with his young bride (whom she described as angelic in beauty and benevolence) to their country. It was that canton of the diocese of Calais, known then by the provincial name of *le Hort Diou*, which is described as having been, indeed, an Eden, watered with innumerable silver springs, flowing over a land of flowers and fruits, round which the girdle of mountains form a defence, instead of threatening it with destruction. They dwelt there with one of the protestant pastors, the early tutor of Anna under whose care she had sought her uncle Argyll, and lived to benefit the simple people of the country, even more by their

Digitized by Google

virtuous example than by a bountiful diffusion of the small income which Mr. Trevanion drew annually, yet not wholly, from the banker through whom his father transmitted it.

The narrator remembered when the Lady Anna was called to meet her Spanish kinsman: she remembered their going forth in health, and hope, and joy — their child in bloom and freshness. She described their return: their child no more — Anna, drooping with this first great sorrow, incapable of proceeding to England, from the state of her sorely-shattered frame; then she gave birth to a second boy, and grief yielded to gratitude.

The Cevenoise spoke of some letter, which had reached Mr. Trevanion about that time, (from his servant, she believed,) which made him defer all thoughts of going to England. This Aura Trevanion rightly judged must have been Philips's communication, of what he believed the family confederacy against his master. — Another letter, at a later period, this informant concluded, seemed to end Mr. Trevanion's wish to quit the mountains. Its receipt affected him at first with a long

Digitized by Google

and profound melancholy, in which his lady shared, and from which they were roused, only by the pious exertions of their parental friend.

When privately questioned, the French woman owned to Miss Trevanion, that the good père had said, it came from Mr. Trevanion's father. Anna guessed how ably and how easily her base cousin's surviellance of this epistle had made her father's denunciation against the supposed daughter of Monmouth fit the condition of Argyll's niece, and so leave Arundell impressed with the belief of Sir Fulk's resolute implacability.

But she kept this sore supposition to herself, whilst her own heart often bled over it—endeavouring to beguile her father's troubled memories and sad forebodings, by presenting to him, or exciting in him, a succession of pleasing sensations.

The marriage and prosperous establishment of their faithful Hollis with the now bright-eyed, almost blooming Damaris, was one source of pleasure; but her surest auxilliary was the little forlorn Villiers.

Lord Chas-cawen liked to hear the Cevenoise describe his pretty grandson; who

Digitized by Google

bore his name, prefixed to that of their great ancestor, Sir Richard Trevanion, and of Arundell's first friend Eustace. He was deeply affected by finding that both his son's children, had been called after himself; and as he heard of the long dark eye, the high white forehead, the ardent colouring, he seemed to live over again the meridian of his life, when Arundell was, what the little Fulk was now.

Melted by such remembrances he soon took an interest in the half-orphaned child recommended to his daughter's care by Eveleen Hungerford; and having him often brought to Treverderet, he watched his pretty play, and yielded to his artless endearments of kiss and prattle, with a fond delusive feeling, that seemed to identify the innocent child with that in the Alais.

Greatly now did the father's and sister's hearts need such solaces; although all that needed proving beyond contradiction, was done by the communication of young Maltravers to Lord Woodvill, after his satisfactory visit to Catalonia. In France, to the fierce out-driving of the protestants, had succeeded a positive order for prohibiting any remaining ones to attempt quitting

Digitized by Google

it upon pain of death. They were then to stay, and be dragged to the rack, the stake, the dungeon, or to worship the host! Every avenue to the Cevennes was therefore shut up: entrance being rigorously forbidden to strangers, every species of communication with their friends abroad was terminated; so that both Lord Chascawen and the family of Lord Villiers, began to entertain the most distressing fears.

A farce of negotiating for the purpose of getting tidings of Lord Villiers, was, at the Duke of Buckingham's urgent request, carried on between the courts of Paris and London: but nothing came of it.

In spite of all prohibitions, however, something of the real situation of affairs in that wretched province, became public, through the indiscreet triumphs of the popish party in France, and the hazardous breaking out of some desperate individual from the beleaguered country. It was known that a deliberate butchery of all who refused to renounce their religion, was begun by the regular troops of Louis XIV., and by a band of blood-thirsty fanatics, or libertines, bearing the title, *Cadets de la Croix;* that avengers of these barbarities had

Digitized by Google

arisen, — loth as the Cevennols long showed themselves to resist injury by violence. Chiefs were spoken of, either maddened by the deeds they saw committed against a harmless people, into the frenzy of believing themselves prophets, and warriors nominated by divine command; or roused, by a deep sense of their wrongs, into a thirst for revenge. A few there were, however, who wielded only a defensive sword; who drew it but to rescue age, childhood, and virgin innocence from outrage; and who would have laid it aside when their object was attained, had not the very act of saving a helpless fellow-creature, pledged the protector to further services of defence.

Thus were some of the purest and most peaceable spirits become entangled in the bloody web of revolt; and Europe stood at gaze upon that scene where Christians were exposed to more frightful combats, than in the arenas of pagan Rome.

In the few public prints of that day, what could be told of the Carnisars — for by that name the struggling population of the Cevennes were meant, — was faithfully narrated. So that Lord Chas-cawen and his daughter, became familiar with the names of Ravenel, Roland, Cavalier, Le

Digitized by Google

Loup, Le Cerf, Plume-Noire,—now written in the durable page of history. They read of the perils and exploits of these daring chiefs; and ever imaging their Arundell as an heroic deliverer, sometimes suffered their hearts to glow with the fancy of his deeds and his deserts. Then came the assurance, that the royal orders in France were to hunt down every one of the Cevennols' champions; and then the truly repentant father began to fear that he was to be punished for his obstinate perseverance in unholy resentment, by the total loss of this ill-used son.

But to such morbid despondency, Eveleen Hungerford, when she came to visit them, (after seeing the widowed Agnes installed mistress of Rohesia,) opposed many a sweet argument. She led her weeping friend to see, that such a prolonged trial might be the best discipline for Lord Chas-cawen's character: and to him she urged the sacred effect it had in rendering his daughter's tenderness more quick and tender; of bringing their hearts closer together; and so, doing away misconceptions of long growth, and ensuring abundant family happiness hereafter.

For their compunctious feelings about

Digitized by Google

Lord Villiers, she had no better quieter than the assurance, that he was languishing for some worthy occupation of a stirring kind, and would voluntarily have embraced the quarrel of the Cevennols, perhaps, even had he not been led there by private kindness. She added, and she had to stifle a wringing sigh, that if he were never to return, he could not have forfeited life in a better cause.

Her own generous heart refused happiness, whilst those of her friends were on the rack; and, although Woodvill's cause had already been pleaded to her by himself and her uncle Lake—although she now knew, that to be his for ever and ever, was the fondest object of her day-dreams, he ventured not to press his suit; but consented to let his constancy be tried, for the indefinite period of anxiety lasting at Treverderet.

Five months after Lord Villiers's departure, a brief billet was received from him by the Bishop of Chichester: it must have been hazarded through some suddenly offered opportunity, and reached its destination by miracle; for it contained only these lines:—

Digitized by Google

" I pray you tell those whom it imports to know so much, that I have got into this country; that I hear the person I seek, is retired, with his family, into the fastnesses of the upper mountains, where, I fear not, to reach unto him ere long, with Heaven's good blessing. He is much honoured here under the title of Plume Noire. I hear, with some regret for the penitent knave, that poor Philips never attained his master. He fell, in the very first attack upon the protestants, in one of the retired places, where a party of them were assembled for worship, in his way to Alais. So ends his history. Commend me duly to my boy through your fair niece, and hold me in your prayers ——"

The letter broke off here; being without even an initial by way of conclusion: but the characters marked it for the hasty production of Lord Villiers; and upon the solitary gleam of comfort its lines afforded, — for it was comfort to know Villiers lived, and yet strained every nerve to reach Arundell Trevanion, — the father and sister of the latter, fixed their eyes and their hearts, through many a succeeding month of hope deferred.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XI.

LATE in the autumn of a year, which had commenced with such an awful instance of the joyful and the terrible, to the father and sister of Arundell Trevanion, whilst they sat sadly regardless of their many comforts, secure in carpeted and curtained rooms, the object of their tearful anxiety was standing towards the entrance of a cavern, which only the moon illuminated, in the most mountainous part of the Vivarais, a district of the Cevennes.

A remnant of armed Camisars and more peaceful Christians, were seen, by the pale light, gathered round his person: some, clad in tattered war-habiliments; some scarcely clothed; and a few in the long oil-skin shirts and enormous tin hats with which that laborious people contest with the torrents and the inundations for the preservation of their embankments.

Every eye was either raised to his, or rooted to the ground, with different shades of sadness or of resignation in them.

Digitized by Google

Arundell Trevanion's countenance was deeply tinctured with the first expression: yet was that, ennobled by feelings of a higher character; so that, even in the garb of an ordinary hunter, with no other mark of distinction than the single black feather which he wore but for a rallying sign, he looked the Arundell Trevanion of former years — the gallant and the noble!

In the remotest part of the wild scene, rose a mound of fresh earth; evidently a new-made grave: a fair woman knelt by it, her figure wrapped in a single coarse garment, which, from its pliancy and want of fashion, took every moulding of her form, though it left actually exposed, only the small clasped hands, the ivory throat and fair face, bent back, so as to receive the full reflection of the moon. Under that stilly splendour, the snow-white brow and sweet sad eyes of celestial blue, the parted lips, and the fall of glistening hair diverging ray-like, seemed covered with a glory; so that one of their persecutors might have been pardoned for believing her a revelation of the holy Mary.

A lovely child lay near her, sleeping amongst piled fleeces. Upon these objects

Digitized by Google

Arundell Trevanion turned his eyes. — "Weep him not, my beloved!" he said, addressing the lady; "our dear père is at rest."

"I do not weep him!" was the soft, low answer; yet tears stood on the pearly cheek: — "I am returning thanks that he is taken from an evil world! I am praying, too, for his poor flock!" Her voice melted away in sorrow.

"Ay, pray for us, lady! pray for us!" cried a rough soldier; "such as we, will need your prayers; now he is gone that used to stay down my hand from striking at these wolves of men, who, not content with mangling the sheep, would devour the shepherds also. I never was for mischieving them, deadly as I hate all image-worshippers, till they would have forced me to bow the knee to their Baal; till they broke my brother on the wheel for refusing to kneel down to the host. I was ever in awe of Père Clery's holy exhortations — rest his sainted soul!—but now, I see not how we are serving God, by waiting quietly to be butchered."

"It is our commission! — our commission brother!" interrupted a pale ema-

Digitized by Google

ciated young man, with death on his cheek, but immortality in his eye. "Let us dearly prize our privileges. We are called to endure; and if we are called, then are we chosen."

The youth ceased to speak; but the light in his cheek, for it was not colour, did not extinguish. Arundell Trevanion involuntarily bowed his head before the martyr spirit; then proceeding on the text of such an answer, repeated the dying exhortations and comfortings of their departed pastor; his pious arguments and tender entreaties: reminding them of what they owed to the memory of his love, and of his holy life; his journeys by flood and ford, by night and day, through storm and snow fog, in sickness or in health; his perilous performance of their forbidden worship upon unsheltered mountains, or in dens which only persecuted Christians ventured to enter—wandering wherever his scattered flock were traceable: going, in short, wherever there were sad souls to comfort, or erring ones to reclaim.

To this affecting exposition of the Père Clery's devoted ministry, Arundell Trevanion added a call upon the gratitude of those that mourned him.

Digitized by Google

"Is it not a signal mercy," he said, "that no murderous hand ever reached our beloved teacher — that he died in peace — in her arms and mine — that we have buried him here, without molestation, in this cavern, which his ministry amongst us ——"

The sentence could not be finished: the speaker's memory was too full of such remembrances as melt easiest the noblest natures; and he cast down his brimming eyes, incapable of proceeding. Well could those who surrounded him, finish his imperfect picture: each individual saw again with the mind's eye, their revered pastor, in this very vault, by the same sacred light which now streamed in upon his grave; or in dark gloom, which they feared to abate by a single torch — reading to them the book of life, or preaching from its spirit.

Tears and sighs were for a long time the only witnesses to their sorrow; then it began to exhale in broken recapitulations of the père's good deeds and sincere humility: but Mr. Trevanion saw the necessity of dispersing the little band, which never collected without risk of discovery.

"My brothers!" he said, "it is now

Digitized by Google

time to part, lest some ranging parties of the Cadets de la Croix should find us here. You would not have that sacred clay disturbed; nor make the grave we have been praying over — our temple too — a place of blood."

"No, truly!" replied a man of middle age, raising his head from the mattock upon which it had been resting; "we have good heed to his teaching. We'll endure to the end, seignior, if the Lord will keep us steadfast. And so, God speed you, that have been our shield and buckler so long. I warrant you are wanted in another land, or you would not leave ours."

At the last words a new species of lamentation ran in low murmurs through the small assembly. Men, women, and children precipitated themselves at his feet, to kiss his hands and garments, and bathe them with their tears.

Arundell Trevanion's very soul was shaken. "Poor flock!" he exclaimed, in a tone of piercing anguish; "and am I to scatter ye?"

At that sound his wife started up from her station by Père Clery's grave, and hurrying to his side, locked one of his hands in hers, with looks of such tender love as only

Digitized by Google

those wedded ones can feel, who love each others souls. Her angel aspect awakened a keener apprehension of what they were to lose, in these poor people, and each and all of them heaped blessings on her ministry amongst them. As Arundell Trevanion listened to their recapitulation of her unshrinking search through woods and rocks, and ways beset by enemies, for the wounded or slain of either faith — that she might dress the wounds of the living, and give holy burial to the dead; when they reminded her how often her merciful example had induced the triumphant Camisard to stay his vengeance, he ceased to think that he should have courage to fulfil his duty, and go where Heaven and nature called him.

The Lady Anna's tears, meanwhile, fell rain-like; she hung upon her husband's shoulder, supported by his encircling arm; sensible to the knocking of his sorely-convulsed heart against her drooping cheek.

"Oh, stay with us! — stay with us, noble Plume Noir! — dearest lady!" burst from many of the feebler lips. "We would, but cannot go along with you."

Then one mountaineer pleaded a bed-

Digitized by Google

ridden parent; another named a son languishing under a death-wound; a third spoke of an outraged sister, whose tragic fate engaged him to die in the defence of others so threatened; too many, alas! sobbed out the names of children torn from their arms, or innocent play, and carried they knew not to what quarter of their country.

The friend they addressed pressed down his throbbing eyeballs with no steady hand: agonizing ever were his sympathies with suffering.

"I would not leave you," at length he said, after long silence, "but even now would throw in my lot — and hers — and that sleeping boy — our all — our only all! for good or ill amongst you: but I, too, have a father — a country — a dear sister pining to see my face again. This is no Egypt to invite 'the old man' into. My aged father fancies that he has wronged me; but I was rash and over-exacting, when I ought to have been humble; and he was wrought on by a villain. Thus I have a parent's heart to heal or break; and a birthright to reclaim for my son. Judge me, then, my brothers, — am I deserting you?"

A general murmur, a general sigh, con-

Digitized by Google

vulsed yet unreproaching, absolved him. Another silence followed, more sad and solemn than the preceding one.

Arundell Trevanion once more spoke.— "You are now grievously sure, that to hope to conquer your oppressors and persecutors is vain. They will never allow you even the most restricted exercise of our religion. The decree which has forbidden any of the reformed to expatriate themselves, under pain of instant death, marks the purpose of the Parisian cabinet — extermination. Dear friends, I know that I speak to Christians, or I would not speak thus plainly. Ye are prepared; — ye are girded! You have embraced the Cross, and are ready to endure its weight, and wear its thorny crown, for the sake of a bright one in the heaven beyond. Such of you, then, as are thus richly endowed with the spirit of martyrs, remain in these savage wilds, waiting upon the will of God. Such as are not yet loosed from mortal affections and ties, — such as feel their souls troubled lest their fidelity should fail before fear and famine, — let them take the advice of their most Christian pastor, who knew that all Christians are not called to the same tasks,

Digitized by Google

and flee from the trial. Switzerland, Holland, Prussia, and the hearts of the English are open to you. In England, you all know by what name, and where, to find Plume Noir — your friend — your brother."

"Our best brother," exclaimed the young man, who had been one of the first speakers; "never did you peril your soul for us; but often your life. Your weapon has never been drawn, except to rescue the people of God. The rack — the wheel — the gallies, the dreadful *Jour de la constance* might have been your portion for this; but you went on, strong in the only strength. For this, Heaven's shield is over you and yours wherever you go: you are one of the appointed. Some great work hath yet to be done in your own land, or you would not be so signally called back there. Let who will, of this poor remnant of faithful ones, follow you: they may do it holily. For me — I abide by the graves of our martyrs, and the ashes of our churches."

The young man arose from the projection of rock upon which he had been sitting, and approaching Plume Noir, as he called him, grasped his hand, in token of farewell. The latter pressed it hard without speaking;

Digitized by Google

successively receiving and wringing those of every one of his companions, as they arose and moved from their resting or standing positions. The Lady Anna had by this time snatched up her child from the fleece-heap on which he lay, and gathering a corner of her woollen mantle round his flower-like face, held him out to the Camisars. "Your farewell and your blessing here, dear friends!" she exclaimed; "yours—yours, Françinet!"

The youth answered the sweet superstition of her request, by taking the child in his arms, and, in a few emphatic words, giving the benediction she sought. He then sealed his lips upon the border of her coarse veil, and passed out of the cavern; at a short distance from which, he was seen to kneel down and pray fervently.

The adieus of them that followed him were of varied expression. Some went in hopeless or patient silence; others gave a loose to natural grief; a few with prophecies that they should all be heaven-supported; a great proportion cheered themselves with the hope of meeting again, though in a foreign land; and all, vowed to devote themselves to watching the ways and providing for the sustenance of Plume Noir

Digitized by Google

and his beloved companions, when they should attempt the passage into Switzerland.

One by one, these sorrowing people stole, like so many shadows, from the cavern, and vanished, by different paths, into the woods or ravines round, leaving Arundell Trevanion so sorely assaulted by the infirm thoughts of extreme compassion, as not to heed the crying of his boy, whom the stir and voices had awakened, and who was now vainly endeavoured to be hushed by his trembling mother.

"Alas! if any enemy is within hearing, —this piercing cry!—they will surely hear it." And wrapping the babe closer in her mantle, so as to suffocate the sounds, she pressed him convulsively against her bosom, and burst into tears. "If we are to perish within sight of our Canaan!" she exclaimed.

Arundell Trevanion roused at her piteous accents, saying tenderly, "Is it my heroic Anna that doubts, where she has so long trusted? Was it in this spirit, dearest, that you withstood all trials and temptations in your first home, and afterwards the risk of life and character, even——"

"Then I thought only of the triumphs of a

Digitized by Google

Christian," was her answer; "now I see his trials. I was a solitary creature then; now, my life is in my husband and my child."

Her fair face dropped upon the breast, to which he pressed her in a silent agony; for he was weak here: he could not say to her, as he had said to the poor persecuted of the Cevennes, that she should prepare for sorrow rather than joy.

"How know I," she resumed in wilder accents, "that we may not be called to yield this innocent lamb to Heaven — in sacrifice — fearful sacrifice? My soul dies in me at the thought. I shall fail, — I shall fail, Arundell!" And she put her hand, with a disordered action, alternately to her brow and her heart. Tears would have relieved her; but they came not. Her husband too well guessed the dangers she had been counting up, through which, if they passed, it must indeed be by miracle: so vigilantly did the king's troops and the militia of Languedoc, watch every outlet by which the doomed reformed, were likely to attempt escape. He sought, then, to divert this natural agony, by opposing to it the memory of mercies; and so leading her to hope that Heaven's ordination for them was

Digitized by Google

not such sharp trial of submitted wills, as her roused fears imaged. He ventured to predict, that they were destined to feel and diffuse happiness; having now learned how gratefully to take it from an almighty Giver: and he arrayed before her past deliverances and present prospects, beseeching her to look on them as the earnests of future blessings. "My country open to me," he said; — "my father impatient to receive us; — such friends raised up to us far away, when we dreamed not of their bare existence! — and that generous Villiers, even now spying out the safest passage for us, at peril of his life! Think, dearest, of the especial providences by which Villiers was led to us at last here, where we were flitting, like the birds, from one frail rest to another! What was his unwearied resolution to reach the unknown Englishman, but a providence? His escape when he was prisoner, even within sight of the rack, by that charitable man's prompt act; — his resurrection from that ghastly wound, which, if his murderers had not believed mortal, he would not have been left for thee to find and heal; — oh, what were these, but providences — manifest, heart-stirring providences, my beloved?"

Digitized by Google

"Oh, my Arundell," interrupted his wife, laying her pale cheek to his, as he held her in his arms, "I fear no more for myself — nor much for you — we may be spared for trial——" She stopped, then went on: "but that sweet one yonder! — so many excellent! — so many innocents! — all ages — all conditions — their lives wrung out by violence, or consumed by fears! — Shall we ever forget that horrid evening at the Mill of Hypolite — before massacre had begun — our churches only closed — all that peaceful congregation butchered, or attempted to be butchered, in the holiest act of life — on their very knees——"

"Yet we escaped, my Anna."

"Heaven was gracious, then!" she answered. "Had you not torn me from the death-stroke, you would have fallen. What slaughter, too, at the Pont de Jean! The cruel Cayla's death avenged, not merely upon the murderer's guiltless kindred, but a whole village."

"It will not bear memory, my Anna! Let us not think of it!" returned her husband, hastily, as though her fears infected him.

"I would forget it, if I could," she

Digitized by Google

returned; "but even in my dreams often — Last night, I dreamt I saw the tragedy acted over again — the poor mother of Ravenel dragged to that tree-root scaffold — I heard her young daughter's shrieks — I saw that little one, holding fast by its mother's gown till the blood spouted over it — and then its eyes grew glassy, its features motionless — and yet it held fast — and, oh, the idiot laugh, that showed its poor wits gone!" Anna closed her eyes, as if she would shut out this picture; whilst, shaking like one in an ague, she suffered her husband to raise her in his arms and bear her beside the mound of earth which covered their friend.

Arundell saw that her whole being was distempered by those perturbations, which had increased in proportion as the prospect of security and a happy home drew nearer. Her spirit was beginning to suffer from that enfeebling of her frame, and strain upon her nerves, which incessant harassments, fatigues, and privations had produced: and now that both mind and body were called to vigorous exertion, and that she knew her husband's and child's lives depended upon her continuance of exertion, she had not sufficient strength left, to be sure of going

Digitized by Google

completely through the enterprise before them: nor was her mind sufficiently unclouded, to see always the guiding star that pointed onwards.

By nature patient and unresisting, it was not until she had harboured amongst the hunted of the mountain wilds, that Anna's spirits began to droop; always in terror for her self-devoting husband, and sharing the Père Clery's dangers and distresses, her anxieties grew almost intolerable; for every day increased the horrors that were perpetrated by the troops engaged in this crusade of extermination, although great and gratifying instances occurred of Roman Catholic's sacrifice of life in the attempt at stopping such barbarities.

One of Anna's sad cares was now terminated; the Père Clery, who had been more than a parent to her, was quietly translated to the world of peace; but she had yet to take her child, her only child, through armed enemies greedy of blood, ere she might bid one boding fear to sleep: as well, she thought, might she hope to bear him unhurt through a consuming fire.

Her present phrensy of alarm, however, was but the passing delirium of a sick soul:

Digitized by Google

looking on the last bed of their reverend teacher, and called by her husband to bless Heaven that his grey hairs were not brought down to the dust by the hand of violence, and that he had lived to know they were recalled fully and freely to England, he led her to observe that with all his reasonings and persuadings, no reminder of what she owed himself, had once mixed with them. Fondly did she notice this; and, as she did so, half-falling at his feet to ask his forgiveness, she exclaimed, "Ungrateful that I am! when I have you still—my generous Arundell — the dearest and the best——" His fond embrace arrested the unfinished sentence.

It was an easy transition from such emotions, to petition and thanksgiving, addressed to a higher object. They knelt, then, together by the good pastor's grave, entreating pardon for the infirmity of their faith, beseeching accessions of spiritual strength, and imploring a blessing upon their perilous enterprise. The moon, as it shone steadily in on them, seemed to hallow that dark solitude, and the beatified spirit of their friend to fill it. Anna's heart, as she prayed, ceased to labour with stormy agitation;

Digitized by Google

gentler and more submitted feelings stole over it; so that when she arose from her knees, and sat down to talk of hopes and mercies, tears began to flow sweetly down her cheeks, because relievingly. Arundell's low whispers, meanwhile, gradually lulled her tears as well as her agitation, and at last she sank into sleep. He then laid her gently upon the fleeces, where their child had long since returned to peaceful slumbers, and, blessing them both with a husband's and father's full love, he withdrew to keep watch for their protection at the entrance of their rude dwelling.

It was on the second day after this farewell meeting of the Camisars and Cevenols, at the interment of their pastor, that Arundell Trevanion, his heart's treasures, and Lord Villiers (now happily returned), prepared to quit their last residence in that convulsed country. Villiers brought information, that one of the most formidable chiefs amongst the people of the Lower Cevennes was rallying a new force round him in the Upper Gevaudan; that the intendant of the province being aware of it, had already despatched thither the Cadets de la Croix, and all the military who could

Digitized by Google

be spared from the revolted dioceses of Alais and Uses, leaving that quarter of the Vivarois near the Rhone thinly guarded. Scouts, indeed, were out, singly and in parties; but their object was to watch the passes from the Gevaudan and the Mont de Mezen into the Velai, to prevent the chief's escape by that way into Switzerland; whilst others were still kept to guard the roads by Beaucaire to Orange, or the Mediterranean. Thus the very road by which the new friends meditated escape, would be the least dangerous at the present juncture; no regular troops were left there — none of the Cadets de la Croix — and nearly all the inhabitants had once professed the reformed faith. That they had not continued to do so, with the knife at their throats, might raise the pity of firmer Christians, but could not excite their indignation; and from such poor exemplars of human feebleness, kindness might be sought—kindness found. It was, therefore, agreed between Villiers and Trevanion, that they need not assume any particular disguise during the early stage of their journeying, nor yet attempt thredding the labyrinth of defiles and precipices, amongst which they

Digitized by Google

must go, in the darkness of night. By day-break they proposed to start, and to continue their progress as long and as far as their tenderer companions could endure.

It may be supposed in what sacred exercises they spent the sleepless hours of the preceding night, throughout which they heard nought save the distant swell of voices from a wood high above them, where some pious Cevennols were singing a hymn. The echoes of those deep solitudes gave a solemn majesty to that simple melody, and made it sound like the choiring of angels.

The sun was breaking through the openings of the mountains, for he had yet far to go ere he ascended to their summits, when Villiers went forth to note the signs of the weather; an important matter in such regions, where one of the ordinary autumnal storms often proves fatal to wayfarers. The height upon which he stood, for they were in a part of that mountainous range styled Les Boutières, showed through their huge rifts, the lower horizon, propitiously streaked with the rosy colouring of dawn: the rest of the heavens were of a clear calm grey; and the innumerable rills and streams issuing from their different sources, to become

Digitized by Google

afterwards larger or lesser rivers, were flowing, not pouring, down their rocky channels.

On those sterile heights, for the Vivarais is the wildest and most dreary of nature's works, only a few human habitations were discernible afar off, belonging to goatherds or hunters. The dwellers in them were yet at rest; so that all was still and silent: except the sound of the many waters, which gently as each flowed separately, made, when congregated, a sublime music!

"The hymn of the wastes!" ejaculated Trevanion, advancing from the cave's mouth, and comprehending, from his friend's aspect, what were the sounds he listened to. "It is the last time we shall hear it, perhaps—" he ceased to speak; but the long and deliberate survey he took of every object before him, showed how strongly he felt the bond of each right affection: and that, although many sad things would always be blent with the memory of the bare crag, and the leafless wilderness, he wished to cherish the memory of them, in gratitude for the shelter he had found amongst them.

Having looked, as they devoutly hoped their last, upon the places round, the friends turned their thoughts to more serious ob-

Digitized by Google

jects, and walking a little onward, repeated their settled plan of route.

Clad in the rudest dress of mountaineers, it may be supposed that there would be a strange discordancy between these companions in adventure. In truth, the expatriated heir of Treverderet had, from his boyhood, been stamped with a character of romance, which, even in the gay saloon, marked him as one born for an extraordinary destiny. He was the same man still, fuller developed. But Villiers, the gallant of a court, was greatly changed: from tender remembrance of his wife, he yet wore his hair in those long, loose locks, which, until these last seventy years, denoted the widowed state, here, amongst men; but, otherwise, gloom and dejection were gone from his appearance: his very bearing was changed; his eye, his cheek, his lip were all rekindled; every limb and sinew of his finely-wrought body was prompt for action. That which would have broken happier men, had repaired him: every fatigue, every danger, borne for others, every good, though afflicting, emotion awakened within him, had been so many steps towards reconcilement with himself; for he received them as witnesses

Digitized by Google

of reconcilement with the Being against whom his life, even more than his will, had long warred. He had been nine months in the country of a devoted people, where he daily beheld the sublimest sacrifices made by the humblest peasants to duty and conscience; and as his heart throbbed at the sight, he felt that a sybarite, or ungoverned life, is a shame and an abomination, — that man may be devil or angel! he had lived for the last three months in constant companionship with the Père Andre and his children, as Arundell and Anna called themselves; so that every hour disclosing some new excellence in them, taught him fresh lessons of self-discipline and humility. He was changed, therefore, thoroughly; and contemplated his return to his country, and his boy, with a sweetness of expectation, which proved that sincere repentance had already extracted the sting of remorse.

The object of the travellers being to get as quickly as possible beyond the Rhone, they purposed directing their steps, first to the mountains which separate Desagnes from St. Julien le Roux, then crossing le Doux river, there a petty stream, many fords of which they were told of, and,

Digitized by Google

gaining that long range which stretches away far above the site of Tournon, where an officer was said to hold command, not over-strict in the inquisition of travellers. This would be a journey of many leagues, and, as they were provided for travel, must be a long time of executing; even should no alarm or accident occur to make them halt. But there was no alternative: the utter extermination of every protestant person, alien or native, was publicly threatened; all travellers were subject to the severest scrutiny — the entrance of merchants was forbidden; and unless the family of Arundell Trevanion made their escape now, under the character of Plume Noire he and they would fall in the general massacre. Better, then, to perish in the attempt, than to remain and be butchered. Several circumstances, as it is known, favoured them at present: besides which the grateful men whom Plume Noire had rescued from death, or had banded with him to relieve others, were voluntarily pledged to have a chain of supplies for him on his road. Certain spots were designated as places where he should find provision concealed, or leathern sabots, the most

Digitized by Google

needful of supplies for such a journey; and two or three houses were pointed out to him, where himself and his party would receive shelter from weariness, or after any accident, and need not fear treachery.

So encouraged, either singly or together Trevanion and Villiers might have reckoned upon getting safely through the difficulties they had to affront; but, with a delicate woman, young and lovely — a child of eighteen months, heavy to carry and yet not capable of walking, how fearfully was danger increased! To separate, was not to be thought of: Trevanion had his wife and boy to protect: — "You must guard me," he added to his friend, with a smile of thrilling meaning: "and as for us both, there is the best Protector of all!"

It was settled that they should attempt the passage of les Bontierès, in their present peasant attire, at sufficient distances for succouring each other, if need required: not *en masse*, lest they should attract attention by the echoes of their steps. In that sea of mountains — for such is the character of the whole Vivarais — the plain country is only one of its smoother waves; so that wherever they went, travellers were

Digitized by Google

sure of finding rocks to rampart them, and thick woods to plunge into: the species of valley, then, upon which they would enter, after quitting the lowest defile of les Bontières, would soon terminate in fresh steeps and wilds; and as habitations and people were most numerous on the sheltered slopes, they deemed it prudent to assume there, some disguise which might ward off suspicion. They determined upon the bold measure of taking upon them the character of Cadets de la Croix, sent from the Mont de Mezen with a Camisar woman, who had engaged to reveal great secrets to the Duke de Roquelaure in Dauphiné.

So many of the vestments of that ferocious band were in the hands of the Camisars, that two were already in their possession; these, carefully hidden amongst other necessaries, formed the burthen of Villiers: Trevanion's arms were to be the carriage and cradle, alternately, of his child — often of his wife.

Reassured, on this eventful morning, by the appearance of the heavens, nor shrinking from the biting air of October, rendered winter-cold by the lowness of the sun, the

Digitized by Google

friends returned into the cavern for Anna and her boy.

They found her taking a sad farewell of Père Clery's grave. Tears were on her cheeks, yet she smiled; but as the dying do, with a peace not of this world: and she put her hand silently into that of her husband. The goat which had added milk to their chesnut bread for some weeks, and which, privileged and fond, came daily to be milked, was at her side waiting for release to the scant pastures. "Go thy ways, poor wench!" said Villiers, stooping to the animal, and giving her and her bright-eyed kid a pat as they stood gazing up at them. "We never provided for thee, so thou wilt not miss us." His voice had emotion in it, and drew the parents' attention momentarily from their child, to him and their beautiful provider; and they, too, gave their sylvan friend a sigh, and something very like a blessing.

Comparatively unbroken in strength, and temperately endued with hope, the first and second day of the wanderers' journey passed without molestation, or other alarm, than what Anna's panic fear at unusual sounds, or doubtful objects, sometimes occasioned.

Digitized by Google

Her spirit strengthened; she grew courageous and collected; and already answered with a sunny smile, when her hardier companions uttered glad auguries. But her delicate frame was ill adapted to climb beetling cliffs, tread steep and crumbling precipices, or ford the rushing torrent; so that, although her husband bore her in his arms over such obstacles, that very circumstance retarded their progress: and even the least fearful of some of the paths she trod were so jagged and precipitous, that her bruised feet often demanded a halt, when her heart was rushing on, and her sweet lips praying for leave to essay another and another steep. The party stopped, therefore, more frequently at first, that she might get enured by degrees to more continued and laborious travel. At present they were still among les Bontières, traversing part of their length to reach that point at which it would be best to descend down into the first, and then second valley, leading to the next pile of mountains. All their way they found almost invariably the supplies promised by their former associates, in pits or hollows, caves or ruined huts. Thus want did not affright them, nor

Digitized by Google

the few savage animals they saw, for they were well provided with arms: but the autumn of such altitudes is the winter of lower regions; and nipping frosts began to benumb their hands and feet through the day, and nearly to stiffen their whole bodies through the night.

Still, however, not even Anna's cheerful patience abated. They had gone on so far, and with so little of positive injury; suffering, indeed, from brief apprehensions, intense anxiety, bodily hardships, and a threatening season; but the little Fulk was well and smiling; and whether lisping in his parent's or Villiers's arms — who loved to hold him, and think of his own boy the while — he was warm in his two-fold wrapper of sheep-skin, and unconscious of what they feared for him.

Whilst they kept the highest ledge of this range, there was small chance of encounter with other human beings at such a time of the year. Summer might have been better for their shelter in woods, but it would have brought back the shepherd and the chesnut gatherer to their rude sheds, and so multiplied their hazards. As it was, they rarely saw other living thing than

Digitized by Google

a solitary eagle soaring above other steeps, yet far below theirs; or a goat, at gaze how he came to his dizzy station of bare granite.

On these heights — where singing bird never ascended, nor goat climbed, nor shrub grew, to wail on the desert air — there reigned a profound stillness; except when storm or tempest rose—then, the clouds broke against their shafts with the force and noise of seas; pouring down their sides billows of hail, rain, thunder and howling blasts, or swelling over their crests in tremendous overflow. Sometimes these masses of devastating powers were seen raging above and around the topmost pinnacles with resistless, deafening fury; or, cleft and scattered by sulphurous bolts or subtler lightnings, opening large chasms, and sinking down to mid air, only to rise again in greater strength and volume. Meanwhile every deep abyss, cataract, or river bed, sent up its cloud of foam to swell the denser vapours; until the whole range of mountains looked like a vast caldron, in which the elements of destruction were preparing for a doomed world. Well might the strife of sounds in the air, have been taken then

Digitized by Google

for the voices of dread spirits employed in the work.

When the Lady Anna sat in her splendid house at Rosas, or her Eden one in the *Hort Diou*, how would she have endured the prophetic view of a single night spent in such a region, and under such skies as those described! She bore, in reality, many such; and he that would have died to save her an hour's suffering, witnessed it without the power to relieve. He could not, however, bear to think of their further repetition; and seeing her strength ebbing away, he ventured to descend the upper steeps, from plateau to plateau, so as to attain gradually to the sheltered vallies, watered by le Doux.

Ere they emerged from the last pass of les Bontières, the travellers assumed their disguise. Anna was placed upon a sorry mule, which they purchased for a few pieces of coin—hitherto useless to them—closely shrouded by repeated foldings of her woollen veil, so as to leave little more of her visible than was necessary for breathing, and apparently fastened, though, indeed, not so, by stout thongs to the animal's back. Trevanion and Villiers drew loath-

Digitized by Google

ingly on, the tunics of men, whose acts rendered the sacred sign upon their vestments a reproach instead of a glory. Outwardly, they were armed after the fashion of those desperadoes; but under their habits they carried their own weapons in addition.

Every defence, every precaution was now necessary; for, in this less involved district, they would be seen by more persons, and exposed to more questions than amongst les Bontières.

There were yet militia about, willing enough to make seizure of peaceable folk under suspicious circumstances, — though not sufficiently hardy, for assisting to find the boldest Camisars in their fastnesses of the Gevaudan or le Haute Cevennes; it was, therefore, incumbent upon Anna's guardians to be ever vigilant. More than once, after successfully fording le Doux, they heard far off the "Qui va là?" of military patroles, challenging some passer-by.

Arundell Trevanion had lived long enough in that province, to have become familiar with its frequented and less beaten tracks; and, latterly, both he and Villiers had drawn out maps of it for themselves, from the minuter description of native

Digitized by Google

Vivarais companied with the Cevennols. Thus they were masters of that great facility for evading pursuit, complete knowledge of the ground; and they were, besides, able to speak the dialect of the common people. By this means they easily gave the gloss they chose to their actions, and terminated curiosity by the bold—it is trusted—justifiable falsehood which they were obliged to maintain. They did not, it may be guessed, pass forward without some hair-breadth escapes from discovery or detention. They were spared rencontres with any Cadet de la Croix; but, from one party of mercenaries, they got off solely by the assumption of stern lordliness and jealousy of interference, when they were proceeding on such an important matter, as conveying a prisoner to the general-duke, who would reveal the lair of the hunted Roland.

Once, a promised shelter threatened to be their destruction. A violent tempest surprised them in a small valley, where the wind, rushing from one gorge of the mountain into another that opened directly opposite, swept along with it every opposing thing; hurling huge stones and limbs of trees, in

Digitized by Google

its furious progress, at the heads of the defenceless wanderers. Scarcely could Villiers or Trevanion stand against the force of such a tempest; and although they tried to fence Anna and her boy, by breasting it before them, their very breaths were taken away, in the vain attempt of stemming the torrent of wind from gorge, gulley, and ravine. The house of a silk spinner, which was one of those noted in their map for hospitable welcome, was, however, within sight; and to it they struggled on, hoping to obtain there shelter for Anna, and a respite from their own anxious fears.

They reached it in vain. Ere Trevanion had tried the latch, Villiers saw, through the low window in the kitchen of the dwelling, a party of stout fellows drinking round a large wood fire; the ruddy light of which, gleaming on their arms and cockades, and a white cross upon the tunic of one, warned him of imminent danger:— a Cadet de la Croix was there. A single movement of his finger, arrested Trevanion's hand as he was about to knock at the door; and blessing Providence for their escape, instead of murmuring at the disappointment, they sped softly back to Anna,

Digitized by Google

apprized her of the danger, called upon her firmness, and betook themselves once more to brave breasting of the elements.

Patience was to have its perfect work in the gentle Anna: too thankful for delivery from this accidental snare, she meekly folded her child closer to her breast and resumed flight. The jaded animal she rode, stumbled in the darkness, or started at the flashes of lightning: now he sank midway into muddy soil — for by this time a perfect deluge was falling — or was carried off his footing by the joint tide of winds and waters, which poured out from a gulley, peculiarly steep and full of torrents, which they were obliged to pass. The violence of these sudden hurricanes, in valleys where there are several openings, is almost incredible to the inhabitants of level lands.

They suffered — suffered greatly, that fair young face and delicate form! but Anna thought not of herself: she was all in her husband and her child; feeling every blast for them — praying silently for their preservation through that pitiless evening, and for that of their generous friend, who endured so much for their sakes.

Digitized by Google

The remnant of a ruined barn, flooded round with water, received them at last; and in that they concealed themselves, fencing themselves in, by piling up bundles of forgotten faggots, and not daring to kindle a fire, lest the smoke should discover them to their enemies. They remained there a day and another night, to dry their garments and arms, and recruit their powers; occasionally they heard the voices and tramps of soldiers passing near their poor citadel, and once the noisy paternosters of a religious procession.

Cheered and invigorated by this rest, they emerged ere the second day was fully broken, proceeding more cautiously, and by less obvious ways than they had just before ventured on. Another secure rest invited them forward—yet that was still remote. Strange to say, this expected haven was a hospice of charitable friars, of whose kindness to every unhappy person, without distinction of rank or creed, and in despite of sore threatening from a harsh superior in Provence, more than one Camisard had had good experience of.—Could they once reach this privileged roof, Arundell Trevanion was led to believe that

Digitized by Google

they would be scrupulously concealed, tenderly lodged, and finally helped away: and it is doing but justice to his best feelings to add, that he wished to have the sweet charities of his heart freed from that imbittered sentiment, with which late events made him regard the professors of a religion that authorized persecution. He desired to find Christian brethren in the humble-minded receivers of a dangerous doctrine.

To the honour of Trevanion and his party, not one of them expressed a doubt of the monks of St. Andre; but, relying on the testimony of others to their benevolence and integrity, looked for the moment of reaching the hospice, as if it were to be the last of their agitations. Every step brought them nearer to the last mountains they must cross, ere they attained the hospice, which stood upon a ledge, midway down the side facing Dauphiné.

Something like cheerfulness then began to mix with solemn thankfulness; and Villiers, willing to beguile Anna of sad memories or sadder apprehensions—for clouds now and then darkened her fair brow,—broke off harassing speculations upon the aspect of the skies, or the alarm of being

Digitized by Google

too near military posts, by playful observations of their several disfigurements; contrasting the portraits of errant knights and ladies, in the pages of romance, with living fugitives like themselves, sordidly clothed, dripping, and dabbled, their very graces turned into blemishes: long and silken locks being, as he said, the soonest soiled and matted; the fairest face and daintiest form, requiring the greatest quantity of disfiguring defences.

"And you and I, Trevanion," he concluded, "may well contest the honour of being limned by some cunning artist for robbers, — downright, vulgar robbers, — with our beards of unmentionable growth, mismatching, as they perversely do, the colour of our hair; clean contrary to their civil fashion, as moustache and ermine-tip. The only one of us unwarped from his natural seeming, smileth there," pointing to the little Fulk; who duly bathed in every clear fountain, then wrapt in a mantle of soft wool, and folded round in his sheepskins, preserved the charms of infancy, purity and freshness. He was now lying on his mothers's lap, like a young rose-bud just gathered in the dew.

Digitized by Google

Anna's sweet eyes thanked Villiers for this tribute, so dear to a mother's heart; and Arundell felt it; though he accused his friend of being a true court-flatterer, fine and penetrating.

The day then present seemed willing to atone for the violence of its predecessor; for although the ways were in parts entirely overflowed, and the forest paths almost impassible by trees splintered to pieces, or blown down with all their boughs and branches, the air was somewhat bland, and the sun cheering.

But rencontres with annoying impertinents began to be frequent; and twice they were challenged by petty authorities. Villiers, from having been a prisoner once, knew best how to frame his answers; and both he and Trevanion maintaining an undaunted port, they got safely through the peril. Under their assumed character, hospitality was pressed upon them by zealous haters of the reformed; and to avoid suspicion, they were occasionally obliged to accept them; with what horror may be imagined. Anna meanwhile enacting the prisoner, enduring — or rather her husband enduring for her — the insults of-

Digitized by Google

fered in the opprobious epithets lavished upon her for belonging to the accursed Camisars.

They had been perilously detained at one of those places, so that they were willing to push on, after leaving it, purposing to travel far into the night, and were proceeding on foot and silently, — for they were now all mounted upon sorry mules, — when they were overtaken by two dragoons, who, after short inquiry into their business, were so well deceived, that hoping to gain a share of the reward for so great a service as that of taking information to the Duke de Roquelaure where to find Roland, they insisted upon joining company: they too, they said, being bound for the duke's quarters.

This was a frightful peril. Never was deception more called for; and never did it cost Trevanion more to dissimulate. Villiers's natural impetuosity suggested rushing upon the men at once, and ridding himself of the disquiet they occasioned, by endeavouring to master and make them prisoners. He revolted from taking their lives; yet, what to do with them when in his power? The trembling half-dying

Digitized by Google

Anna, hugged her boy in silent fear to her bosom; hearing as she did — for an apprehensive mother is all ear — that rushing amongst some bushes on one side of them, which indicated the presence of ambushed foes. Perhaps, every instant she expected to see armed men rush out. No such ambush, however, was manifested; and the party went on, purposely entertained by Lord Villiers, with the relation of military adventures, marvellous or ridiculous, which his quick wit suggested as the best means of diverting their attention from the telegraphic signs occasionally passing between him and his friend, by which they shadowed out to each other a mode of escape from this unwelcome escort.

Luckily they had provided themselves with a flask of strong yet wretched spirits, when they purchased their mules, by way of liniment for their soaked or benumbed feet — and to this they looked for deliverance. Could they intoxicate the men — their escape from them might be effected without much danger. On, therefore, they went; Villiers affecting reckless gaiety, Trevanion the cold and grave superior. Just before evening had commenced, they

Digitized by Google

entered a little recess which fronted a valley, which, as it extended, became more level, and was every where intersected by dykes and watercourses. All behind the sheltered nook, rose thickets of stunted oaks, from which innumerable openings led direct into the heart of the mountain. The spot seemed made on purpose for persons in their sad circumstances; and Villiers, complaining of thirst and pointing to the sparkling waters, proposed staying there to refresh themselves. The proposal was accepted.

Trevanion gravely assured himself, as it seemed, that his helpless prisoner was not able to attempt escape; taking that opportunity for whispering to her in English, what he meant to do, and what she ought to attempt; then, returning, he seated himself by the side of the ruffianly horsemen, whose beasts were left to graze with the mules, and prepared to assist Villiers in persuading them to drink of his spirit flask.

Persuasion was not needed: the men produced wine, evidently plundered from a noble cellar, and having only some bread and a few onions, the potent liquors ap-

Digitized by Google

peared likely to produce soon, the desired effect. But they gave fierce toasts, to which succeeded ribald jests, and flat blasphemies, even with the mockery of a holy war in their mouths; boasting of acts which iced the trembling Anna with horror, as she hung over her restless child, who was beginning to start and struggle in her arms for release from too close muffling. Every tear her husband fancied her shedding, was a drop of blood wrung out of her husband's heart; and Villiers shook with impatience to spring upon the monstrous boasters of iniquity. But Trevanion's convulsed sighs were drowned in the noisy mirth of his coarse companions, and Villiers's abhorrent emotion was well hidden under expressions of thoughtless joviality.

At length the soldiers sung; at the yell of the first note, a sound so different from the low music of his mother's lullabies, the little Fulk began to cry audibly.—"Silence that spawn of a devil!" exclaimed one listener:—"Silence, thou imp of hell!" he added, at the second plaint of the unconscious innocent.—"If I don't throttle thee!" exclaimed the singer, breaking off in fury, and following his threat with an

Digitized by Google

irrational shout, so deafening, that a delicate organ already vibrating to pain by the preceding dissonant sounds, was agonized by this, and the boy's cries became screams. The soldiers had as yet only taken as much wine as served to whet their diabolical natures, not deaden them; and he that sang, springing up whilst he spoke, cried out, "By the blessed manger! I'll baptize the young heretic — he shall into that water,"— darted upon Anna, and tore the child from her arms, hurling it as suddenly from him as he would have done a quoit. In dragging the boy by main force from her arms, he fairly pulled her down from the mule, and as the violent action laid all her face, and great part of her white bosom bare, his passions took a new direction. Trevanion saw the devilish sparkle of his eye, and rushed upon him, yet not before he had seen his child caught in the very air by some person who flashed out from the thicket behind, and vaulting with it across the water-course, was followed instantly by one of the soldiers; and, after an instant's hesitation, by Villiers. Hopes for them all, thrilled through him as he precipitated himself upon the half-inebriated ruffian, who

Digitized by Google

was stooping to lift Anna from the ground. In such a position he had his enemy at advantage; and crushing him in one powerful grasp, he flung him on his back, and planted his knee upon his body. The man's eyes glared horribly between rage and amazement: he struggled, or rather tried to struggle; but he was fairly mastered; and in obedience to his conqueror's commands, who vowed to shoot him on the instant if he uttered sound, lay at last still, whilst he was bound tightly and strongly, round and round by the thongs that had been used for Anna's feigned bonds. Trevanion meanwhile telling Anna, in English, with a gasping breath, what he had seen, and what were his hopes for their poor boy. She scarcely comprehended what he said; her brain seemed palsied; she stood without power to move or speak, whilst he dragged the soldier a little way into the thicket, and leaving him there, hurried back to her, whom snatching up, he bore out beyond a bend of the bank which intercepted their view.

Anna hung upon his breast; her eyes closed, and scarcely breathing. Trevanion, too, scarcely breathed; but his lack of breath

Digitized by Google

was from impatient watching. He saw one slight figure at a distance holding his boy aloft, bounding over hedge and cleft, and water-course, mocking the pursuit of the heavy-footed horse soldier, and the agile Villiers. The echoes rung with the ineffectual discharges of the soldier's pistol, and the unknown's cry of "*Les puits d'amour!*"

"It is Francenet!" exclaimed Trevanion, "our cerf to the last!"

At that sound Anna's eyes opened—she breathed, she gazed around her, she saw making for a far-off defile, the fleet, and once untirable foot of him who, in his day of strength, well merited the title given him by friend and foe. She forgot that Francenet was worn by sad vigils and pious exercises; by involuntary fasts (not in superstitious observance) but for the sake of having food to yield to others. She saw only that her child was in his arms—she knew there was a Father of mercies in the heavens; and she sank down on her knees, where her senses left her entirely, ere aught, except the overcharged heart, had formed a thanksgiving.

Trevanion threw himself on the ground

Digitized by Google

to raise and succour her; hearkening, after some moments of total silence, to the quick sounds of shot in the direction he had just been watching. More military, too probably, had joined the soldier; his boy might be recaptured. What was his agony of prayer at that moment, when his wife lay as if in a death-trance, and he could not leave her!

His warm breath, his warm tears, perhaps the mere beatings of his faithful heart, restored life to her, for she sighed, and half opened her eyes—a moment's dreamy tranquillity was followed by intense recollection. She sprang up with sudden energy, calling on the name of her child, enquiring if he were coming back to them! — Trevanion calmed her sufficiently to allow of his climbing a tree, and looking thence for the objects of their torturing anxiety. He then saw that Francenet and his precious burthen were nowhere visible; they had happily, perhaps, attained the brakes of a rocky defile within sight, where there were abundant facilities for concealment. No other combatants were left but the second soldier and Lord Villiers: that generous friend wary not to draw the fellow's attention too soon to him-

Digitized by Google

self, lest their strife should attract his comrade to them, and so ensure the recapture of little Fulk, evidently provoked the encounter now, that he might deal with him singly; for he was seen retreating in a direction wide of the mountain pass, and of the glen he had started from, gallantly returning the random shots of his enraged pursuer, with a steadier fire.

The mortal pang passed from Trevanion's soul at this sight: he bowed in speechless gratitude before Him that tries, and spares.

A few disjointed sentences imparted comfort to Anna: he cheered her with the hope that their scattered party would reunite, and in a safer scene.

"Les puits d'Amour" was one of the factitious names given by certain of the Cevennols to places to which they directed each other, even in the hearing of their enemies, without imprudence, leaving them to guess vaguely at those arbitrary titles. In the Camisars' cipher, therefore, Les puits d'Amour, instead of some natural wells near the frontier of Alais, meant the Hospice of St. André; and thither, after agitating discussion, Trevanion induced his

Digitized by Google

Anna to let him direct their steps, instead of returning into the wilds already passed; trusting Villiers's preservation to his own arm, and their boy's to Françenet. This matter hurriedly settled, he sought the dastard wretch in the thicket, and carefully reviewing and adding to his fastenings, sternly answered his surly petition for one hand's partial freedom to help him to get the food which was laid beside him, by showing the grace already bestowed on him in sparing his life; demanding, therefore, the only return he could make, a solemn promise that he would not have the fugitives followed, after he should get release from the passengers of the ensuing day.

The man unhesitatingly added an oath to the promise exacted; yet such a grim smile gleamed over his swart visage, that Trevanion's hand involuntarily sought for his hunting knife: but he resisted the impulse of so ending the doubt which that smile awakened; and hastened back to his best-beloved, whose bloodless cheek showed how soon a mother's fear had chilled the glow of better thoughts.

Trevanion unloosed one of the horses belonging to the soldiers, and placing his

Digitized by Google

wife upon it, mounted before her: another moment, and they were galloping forwards in the direction of their yet remote but hoped-for shelter. The dusk, the swiftness of his motion, and some of the military trappings, which had not been removed from the animal when left to graze, assisted in securing his unmolested passage. Still, however, he did not relax his speed until the night shade fell, and his breathless Anna confessed the need of slower motion. Then they went softlier, giving him time for encouraging her with such arguments, as are best appreciated by the sex ever looking for protection to earth or Heaven.

Ere midnight they reached the lower steeps of the mountainous group in which St. Andre was situated. The hospice stood in one of the second stages of vallies on the further side; and although travellers thither might for some time keep in paths moderately perilous, they must eventually ascend to the upper region, and cross places apparently inaccessible, or fearfully lengthen their journey by continual windings. A mule only could hold its footing even on this lower road of crag and chasm; so that Trevanion, casting off

Digitized by Google

his habit de la croix, abandoned their horse, after stripping it of its trappings, and bore his weary companion into a pine wood, where he constructed a sort of shed for her and himself with fragments of trees and withered broom. There was no moon; but the heavens were thickly spangled with stars, and their light, which seen from an open plain, or through young green leaves, would have awakened pleasure, now glimmering through the funereal canopy of the pines, seemed ghastly and portentous. Anna fancied they shone only like torches round a bier: yet she strove to meet her husband's fond consolations with a smile; smothering the deep sigh that would fain have usurped its place, whilst thinking of her eldest born, who had been taken from her by death — yet had yielded his sweet breath on his mother's breast. How, oh how, she thought, might her little Fulk end his!

They rested in their tree hut — their bodies, not their minds; for neither slept, though each alternately affected to do so; and by day-break they were on foot again.

They had not skirted the mountain long, when the distant clash of arms, and a repetition of monotonous sounds came on the

Digitized by Google

wind, warning them that they were near a spot where some guard was relieving: they paused, turned, and plunged back into the intricacies of the mountain; then changing from one deep abyss or wooded steep to others, as approaching noises impelled them, they wore out the long, long day that followed. And, oh, how long it seemed to them, from whom half their lives was torn in their helpless child—who feared, for each other's sake, to relieve a full heart by lamentations! All that day they had no sustenance; for even the wild fruit-trees were now stripped of fruit; they had left their little wallet of husbanded provisions, upon Anna's mule, forgetting it in their anguish of spirit; and in proportion as they receded from their former abode, so had it become more difficult for their faithful friends to make depôts for them, out of their own miserable portion of food.

Anna was not aware that she grew dizzy for want of nourishment; she attributed the giddy sensation, to the precipices they were amongst: but her husband knew the delicacy of his fair flower, which ever bore only the softest dews in sparing measure, therefore needed them frequently; and as

Digitized by Google

grey evening once more gave them the welcome signal, he proposed, though doubtingly, to leave her hidden in the huge hollow of an old oak, that he could fence up with thorns, and go alone in search of nourishment for her.

Anna would not be separated from him: she rose, with looks of devoted love, and, supported by his arm, resumed her painful travel.

They were still drawing onwards in the direction of the hospice, though on a higher level than they at first attempted, where habitations were consequently less frequent; so that they spent an hour in thridding the mazes of a steep and wooded ravine, ere they descried a single house of mean appearance, attached to a forge, not far from its outlet.

To this dwelling Trevanion drew slowly and cautiously; for his Anna grew paler and paler: her parched lips eagerly drank at every spring they passed; and his own strength began to fail from anxiety, and the more frequent necessity he had had of late, to bear her in his arms.

Having reconnoitered the place well, listening to suspicious sounds, and peering in through chinks of the rude door, —

Digitized by Google

for he feared to approach the casements, cheerful as was the invitation of the light shining through them,—he tapped gently; a second tap, and the door opened.

A sour-looking man, past his prime, unlatched it: he held up the blazing pine-torch he had taken out of a rude iron standish, the better to scrutinize the face of his disturber, gruffly asking what he wanted? Trevanion simply replied, "A little food." The man eyed him again more narrowly—eyed his shrinking companion; then abruptly bade them come in, and take his supper.

They were already over the threshold; for he plucked Anna in somewhat suddenly, and closed the door as soon as Trevanion followed. The husband's pulse began to throb with fearful misgivings: if he should have brought his best-beloved into the very net of destruction, by his impatience for her relief! Fearing further to provoke or create detention, he motioned her to follow his example, and sit down on a rough bench by the table.

A bowl of smoking milk-curds, and a loaf of coarse flour, were there. "Eat quickly," said their host.

Digitized by Google

Trevanion, whilst he held the bowl to his wife's lips, thanked their entertainer, and invited him to his share of the meal.

"There's not enough for three," was the gruff reply. "I can do without supper for one night: eat quickly, I tell you, and take what you leave of the bread. I expect acquaintance you may not like, anon."

Doubtful whether they were addressed by friend or foe, for the matter and manner were at variance, Anna and her husband hastily swallowed a few morsels of the cake, took a long draught each of the reviving whey and curd, and, retaining the bread, rose to depart.

"Now, hie ye away, poor miserables!" said the man, adding a wedge of dried figs to his gifts. "Get off to some far hiding place; up aloft yonder, where the very goats cannot reach you! here, below, there's a search after you; you are described. I knew you, Monsieur Camisard, by your eyelashes. Away, I say. Though I was once one of the reformed, I have no mind to be hanged for feeding you;" and thrusting them out as forcibly as he had suddenly drawn them in, they were delivered up

Digitized by Google

again to fear and flight. Like his sister, Arundell Trevanion was remarkable for the length and darkness of his eyelashes; and it was not wonderful, then, that such a peculiarity once seen, should form a principal feature in a description for identifying his person. It was now too evident, either that his mercy to a villain had been basely repaid, or that the other soldier had escaped the rifle of Villiers.

The present, however, was not a time to think of aught except providing for their own safety; and lifting Anna up, he carried her as far and as fast as possible to him, in an upward direction of the mountain. Then he sat him down to draw breath, and repose his strained sinews; pillowing his throbbing temples for that brief time upon her gentle bosom; allowing her to act the cheerer and the comforter, by calling up before him the images of his father and his sister, for whose sake, as well as that of their lost child, they must strive against their failing powers.

The exercise of those blest offices reanimated her who essayed them; so that when they arose again, and resumed flight, both were strengthened.

Digitized by Google

They were in one of those upper vallies which in summer afford sweet pasturage for the poor sheep that are driven there. It was solitary now. Yet it might be traversed by military in chase of themselves, or fugitives like themselves. They fled, then, higher still; ever tending to ascent, although scaling rocks, and plunging into chasms, and thridding precipices which would have been impassable to Anna in a less perturbed state: for as they approached the topmost levels, the cold became intense, and a keen frost iceing the jagged points, made it difficult for the foot, or even hand, to keep firm station on them. The inflammatory effect which the bitter air produced upon Trevanion's lungs, warned him not to scale these heights too far: and in a trough of the mountain he found a secure hiding place. His familiarity with Nature's works made him quick in detecting her secrets, and they no sooner entered this enormous gorge than he suspected the existence of such a cave as he speedily found. It was a cavern or grotto in the wall of the rock, less accessible without, and more tortuous within, than he could have hoped. Directly over its mouth, amongst the rocks

Digitized by Google

of granite above, grew a few trees, over whose perpendicularly inclined bodies and high roots a small stream broke into several lesser ones, through those obstacles of cliff and bough, and hanging, in a canopy of water, over the entrance of the cave, poured down the centre of the mountain cliff with resistless impetuosity.

Trevanion did not get his Anna under this shower of rills without being completely wetted in guarding her; but he was proof against casualties, and joyed at such a forbidding portal to his fortress. There was nothing within the cavern, except soil and blown-in leaves, and deserted birds' nests; yet they devoutly thanked Heaven for such an asylum: striking a light with the flint and steel of his arms, and kindling a fire of the combustible nests.

They were now wide away from any spot where they might expect to find provisions or — what was far more precious — some token to intimate their friend's and child's safety: they were in the most desolate spot of the Vivarais; yet there they must abide, until they might calculate upon their pursuers being gone in the direction of the

Digitized by Google

Velai; and so resume their route to the hospice.

They submitted their souls to this severe trial of patience. Three days and nights they harboured there: they ate of the coarse bread, and dried figs given them by the charitable Vivarais; they drank of the clear water that flowed down the centre of the immense defile, which their cavern bordered: they chafed each others frozen limbs, when their fuel was exhausted, and they tried to hope; yet more, they sought to fortify each other's best hopes, by recalling the brightest blessings of the past — its alternation of checks and encouragements — its unvaried testimony to the wisdom and goodness of an almighty Guardian. Anna purposely renewed conversations often repeated, containing all that Villiers had told them of Arundell's family history during his exile: what Aura Trevanion had done and attempted for her brother — what his father had suffered from the struggles of parental love against a villain's artifices — the rare interest taken in their fortunes by Eveleen Hungerford, and her affianced Woodvill; all these things she dwelt upon, making them balms to a bleed-

Digitized by Google

ing heart, if not quite the cordial she wished.

Still, however, she suffered; he suffered: and the more because they were inactive; not pushing forward in pursuit of their boy. Even Trevanion sometimes stole from her side, after exhausting himself in seeking arguments for patient submission, to walk amongst the loose flints of the ravine; to shed hot tears — tears wrung out of a father's heart's blood; often, fate's stern usury for the transport given in a father's joy. Yet Trevanion's right trust could not be said to wither; he merely felt calamity: and surely not to suffer, is not to have that in our bosoms, which we control in obedience to Divine command.

In these solitary loiterings the sight of the starred heavens, insupportably oppressed him. The awful tranquillity of those myriads of worlds whirling above him, each fulfilling its appointed course, submissive to One unchangeable will, seemed to blot him from himself; to render him and every object of his affection atoms, dust! — his joys and sorrows, nothings! Yet was his pulse of suffering throbbing on — was it, then, nothing? his love for the wife of his

Digitized by Google

bosom, which he believed twined with their immortal being, was that nothing? No! that was a great, a glorious substance of real imperishable possession; and his mental eye cleared again as he looked upon it.

On the evening of the third day he decided that they might resume their course down the mountain on the morrow; for the abysses they had to fathom, and the steep acclivities to descend, under the deceiving shadows of night, would have been too hazardous for them to encounter, all slippery as the rock pinnacles were from the occasional melting and freezing of waters over their surfaces. That night, then, he could repose for himself as well as for his beloved; and commending themselves and the objects of their racking anxieties, to the continued protection of Providence, did, indeed, on their flinty couch, take in a long draught of refreshing sleep. A remarkable rawness in the outward air awakened them; and perceiving by the light that it was morning, they wrapped themselves closely in their rude garments, and, silently invoking the same blessing, issued forth.

When Trevanion carried out his wife

Digitized by Google

from the jet of waters above their arched door, he saw that a new obstacle was appointed to oppose them. Snow lay on either line of loose stones bordering the water-flow, which, though melting quickly as the water insinuated through it, he feared to step on; he, therefore, took his path through the shallow stream, till he attained the part where he meant to have climbed out of the mountain trough, and taken the nearest way to the hospice.

He did attain this point; and he did climb the fractured rock with Anna in his arms; whom he lodged amongst some stems and roots of old chesnut trees. With what horror did both husband and wife look upon the prospect beyond!

Every where, the open mountain, its ledges, and hollows were alike spread with snow; just thick enough for receiving distinct impressions, yet not sufficiently deep to allow of the leg sinking in, and so destroying the print of the foot. Trevanion might, indeed, carry his precious burthen over this fatal snow for one or two leagues; but who was to say what hazards of detection might occur during such an impeded and lengthened journey? The print of

Digitized by Google

her small foot along with his, would too surely identify them to their pursuers, or to those who might have heard of the pursuit. What remained, then, but to return, and resign himself to days, perhaps, weeks — no it could not be weeks — of famine added to misery of soul! For the first time he stood motionless with despair. Anna read his fears in the drops that she saw gather upon his forehead. She looked at him earnestly — devotedly: her own heart suddenly nerved — her thoughts cleared. "You fear our foot-marks," she exclaimed; "let us reverse our sabots."

Trevanion at once comprehended her: hope rekindled in his darkened eye: he cast himself by her side, and unfastening the worn coverings of her feet, replaced them as she directed; tying them on with strips of leather torn from his rude mantle, and quickly making a similar alteration in his own.

Thus attired, and blessing Heaven for the inspiration, every step they took down the mountain appeared, by the traces left on the snow, to be made by upward travellers; so that whatever persons descried the stamp of his firmly-set foot, and her delicate one,

Digitized by Google

would be led to track them into the continually-enlarging trough they had left; and might then dissipate time and energy, in hunting them through the many defiles and abysses which diverged thence.

To secure themselves against immediate encounter with any such unwelcome objects, they trod swiftly over the level of snow into a wilderness of thicket and broken masses of rock; keeping in the least accessible parts there; gradually descending lower and lower, and getting nearer the lateral valley, in which stood their expected haven.

Happily, thaw had commenced upon these lower slopes, relieving them from all fear of being tracked: they passed once more over ground which retained no mark of their steps; and, oh! how throbbed their hearts — how diverse were the tides of hope and fear, joy and misgiving, which ebbed and flowed through them, when they discovered in the cold blue of evening, the gilded cross of the hospice glittering in the faint gleam left by a setting sun! — For once that sign of a monastic abode, was hailed with transport by them.

At the gate of St. André no parley was necessary: — their wretched state was their

Digitized by Google

passport. One of the six brothers admitted them, looked intently at them, then whispering, "You are expected," led them into a small refectory. The fraternity were at supper, clad in the garb of their order. One person, in a different habit, rose at the entrance of the new comers. He uttered a cry of joy: — it was Villiers! Trevanion and he embraced like brothers; whilst Anna, obeying the gracious call of a voice in an inner chamber, of which the door stood open, flew in, to find her child on the knee of a grey-headed lay brother.

The day had dawned in tribulation and darkness of soul, — it ended in light and joy. Villiers had to tell of Françenet's return to his mountain home, after bearing the boy, whom his unsuspected escort of the travellers had saved, to the friendly hospice. He had to tell of the disabling wound which he himself was obliged finally to inflict upon his pursuer, ere he got free to attempt a reunion with the companions he had left. Each of these things, and other signal mercies, demanded far more than interchanges of gratitude between those who were the instruments and receivers of them: and as rapturous thanksgivings burst from all their

Digitized by Google

lips and rained from their eyes, — for happiness unmans a noble heart, when calamity assails it in vain, — the brethren of St. André sat at gaze, marvelling to find such evidences of true devotion amongst persons condemned, by their heresy, to everlasting fire.

The brothers harboured their guests privately for a few days; labouring lovingly and strenuously at their conversion: absolving themselves for acting against the known will of their spiritual and temporal superiors, by the fallacious hope of gaining such converts to their church. But Villiers told them he was more likely to be convinced by their lives than their arguments; and Trevanion, professing to feel only the atmosphere of their Christian benevolence, was willing to forget that it was exercised against their conviction of duty; and to see in them only fellow-servants of the same divine Master.

The monks of St. André, then, toiled ineffectually; reaping no richer harvest than an abundance of grateful thoughts and gracious remembrances: for no sooner were the passes thought practicable, than our wanderers took their final farewell of the

Digitized by Google

Vivarais and the Cevennes. They crossed the Rhone successfully, by the management of the brothers; and, under convoy of one of them, skirted Dauphiné, and at length set foot on the free and hospitable land of the Switzers. A longer time was given there to rest than they could well have spared; but Anna's strength was done:—with the strongest motive for exertion, the power ceased; and, exhausted by so much previous anguish, and afterwards by the very transport of regaining her child, she broke up, and was many, many days ere she could be urged to the gentlest mode of travel. This forced rest, however, allowed time for letters to reach England, and prepare those dear ones there, who had been otherwise overpowered by the suddenness of long-delayed hopes unexpectedly granted. The travellers quickly followed their letters; hurried through the States of Holland; and arrived in England at the commencement of 1687, exactly five years after Arundell Trevanion had quitted it.

Every gate of his home was standing open for him, when he and his, came in sight of venerable Treverderet, bedded in the old trees, yet now only green with its ivies.

Digitized by Google

But the nearer he drew towards it, the more was his way obstructed. An eager crowd was waiting to welcome him, and give warning of his approach, by loud and successive cheerings.

Cotters and miners, farmers and retired servants, even numbers of the gentry, came forth to meet the honoured and so long expatriated heir. The waving of hats and bonnets, — the shouts of the young men, — the feeble "God bless ye!" of the old, — the tears, — the joyous looks, — the tramplings to get at his carriage, — the outstretched or uplifted hands, — the benedictions on his Anna and his boy —— it was all too much!

And when he got into the well-known house, — saw his sister waiting on the threshold to catch his first embrace, then left her in possession of his heart's treasures, — hurried through the opened door into the oak parlour, and found himself in the arms of his father, — it was too much: he became insensible!

Little more need be added to this history. — Although Arundell Trevanion returned to the fullest domestic happiness —

Digitized by Google

for he soon saw his Anna and her boy reign nearly absolute over his fathers's affections — and found in his fond sister the dearest sympathy with each and all of them,— although his fair fame was cleared, and his rights restored,— he came to share in great political anxieties. As Françenet had predicted, he was ordained for great things: he was destined to take a prominent part in those measures which effected that glory to Englishmen — a bloodless revolution, — which seated William of Orange upon a throne, forfeited by his uncle's violation of the constitution he had sworn to maintain, and secured to us the succession of the Protestant princes of the House of Hanover.

In this noble work, beside other immortalized coadjutors, Mr. Trevanion had the happiness of acting in concert, throughout every stage of it, with the lords Woodvill and Villiers: to them he owed such obligations as nothing but entire friendship can recompense. His personal experience of the miseries diffused by persecution, made him at once resolute in resisting the admission of doctrines amongst the rulers of his land, which give license to the spirit of per-

Digitized by Google

secution, and forward in advocating the cause of a free and full toleration. He was for leaving every man, the unrestrained liberty to believe and worship after his own conscience; requiring only the abeyance of some temporal ambitions from the few, for the good of the many, who merited as little the odium of tyranny, for maintaining their established church, as for preserving the monarchical form of government against such visionaries as still laboured for a republic.

His father's altered views quickly assimilating entirely with his, he had soon the gratification of constant companionship with him, upon every great question: and succeeding to that station, in the Lower House, which his cousin's death left vacant, he supported his character for ardent patriotism, with a discretion tempering energy, that made him equally dreaded and respected by those who hated his principles.

Avowing the sentiments they did upon the conduct of the acting government, neither father nor son met the efforts of James to conciliate their good-will. They lived aloof from court; and it was not until the

Digitized by Google

accession of William III. that they reappeared there: Arundell Trevanion, to have the white-spur privilege re-bestowed by the new monarch at his coronation; and Lord Chas-cawen, to show himself at that august ceremony, with all the state and magnificence of the first possessor of the barony.

Once it would have galled, now it was a gracious thought to him, that he owed this ability to the love of his children. The Treverderet estates were set loose from every weight. Anna's fortune, divided by her Spanish kinsman between herself and religious institutions, had remained in trust with a great foreign banker, whilst she and her husband were caged in the Cevennes, and transferred upon British securities, was destined to perpetuate the dignity of the Trevanion name.

The first person Arundell Trevanion hastened to see, after embracing his family, was the honoured grandfather of Eustace Saulay; with what deep and dear memory of the early friend, whose example, lowly as was his rank, had first taught him what to prize most in life, may be imagined.

Digitized by Google

The old man's joy was happily restrained by the timidity with which age approaches every seeming good of earth: comforts, therefore, grew upon him: and, finally, in the frequent visits of all the dwellers in Treverderet, and the prattle of the children he saw successively grow up there, he enjoyed serenity and security to a very advanced age.

Eveleen Hungerford was the first visitor at Treverderet after Mr. Trevanion's return. She came to make the acquaintance of himself and his Anna, and to share the transports, as she had faithfully done the griefs, of her friend Aura. Lovely in youthful beauty and the soul's loveliness, her bright nature seemed at once to have broken from every cloud; shining out glad, and gladdening, over her friend's destiny. She was already pledged to end her avowed trial of Lord Woodvill's steadiness, whenever Mr. Trevanion should have terminated the anxieties there by his appearance; and after she had spent two or three weeks under the same roof with the happiest of wedded lovers, it must be owned she showed no unwillingness to ratify her en-

Digitized by Google

gagement. Yet, blessed as she was in her husband, she, too, had her share in the pains resulting from those acts which paved the way to James II.'s abdication: her uncle Lake was one of the seven bishops whom that infatuated prince committed to the Tower, for their most respectful petition against his alarming assault upon our church.

In that scene, which even Hume has described as at once majestic and moving, from the firmness of the prelates, and the emotion of the spectators, she wept — she trembled it is true; but there was a sacred glow at her heart the while, which rendered her lord's fond comfortings available for her after support, through the doubtful period of the bishops' imprisonment and trial. And when they were acquitted, she clasped her uncle's honoured knees, with the same passionate affection with which she would have done those of Ridley, had he escaped by miracle from the flames of Smithfield. Precious are these memorials of our forefathers' Christian courage and Christian sensibility! May such spirits never fail in our land!

Digitized by Google

It remains now only to speak of Lord Villiers, who accompanied Mr. Trevanion into Cornwall, upon landing from Holland; but going thither merely to embrace and bless his boy, ere he hurried to his dying uncle in Yorkshire, he did not mix himself with the happy party at Treverderet. The Duke of Buckingham's death took place, as the historians of that time tell us, in the spring of that year. Villiers devoted himself previously to all the offices of a son by his kinsman's sick bed; and, when the duke's will was opened, found proof that, in ceasing from the vanities and vices into which this very Buckingham had laboured to bring him up, he had not made himself less an object of the same man's regard, when he stood upon the confines of another world.

Purposing, then, to settle himself principally at one of his country residences, and having recovered from the extravagance of his first feelings against a polished education, Lord Villiers made arrangements for giving himself the delight of his child's residence with him, and withdrew the boy from his peasant home in Cornwall: yet to

Digitized by Google

Treverderet the little Charles duly came when his father visited there; for he was at that most endearing age in which innocent prattle delights, by giving sudden glimpses of acute sense or sweeter tenderness; and dearly as both Lord Chas-cawen and his daughter loved the angel child of their Arundell, they could not fail to cherish, most fondly, the remembrance of little Villiers's beguilement of their long anxiety on his account.

For the first four months after Arundell's return, Miss Trevanion felt sure that she doted upon the child of her loved brother and equally dear sister, to a degree which distanced her attachment to the poor little Charles; but insensibly the latter appeared to have regained more than his due share in her affections. When she pressed him to her breast, a softer, and a softer feeling came over her, nearly approaching to sadness: but attributing this to pity for his motherless state, she sought no farther into its cause. The sweet boy himself ended her delusion. One evening (when the little Fulk was three, and Charles Villiers, four years old,) she sat in the bay of a window,

Digitized by Google

suffering the younger child to amuse himself with the tresses of her hair, whilst she told the other tales suggested by some figures in the stained glass before them.

Lord Villiers, passing out of the room with Lord Chas-cawen, stopped to listen for a moment to her ingenious invention, to which his boy was hearkening, "the rapt soul sitting" in the large lifted eye of his father's blue. As the legend ended, the little creature, in a transport, flung himself upon Miss Trevanion's neck, and laying his pretty cheek to hers, exclaimed, "I wish you were my mamma!" Lord Villiers crimsoned from head to foot; her father looked on him, and smiled.

From that moment, Aura Trevanion's eyes ever fled those of Lord Villiers; but with that blushing, trembling movement, which none may mistake for scorn or indifference. The enraptured Villiers kindled with hope, where once he had only sighed over what he believed a presumptuous wish. Love, led to hope, is not long silent. A few months after this incident, Arundell Trevanion's happiness was completed, by perfecting that of his sister and his friend;

Digitized by Google

and it is but just to say, that no after conduct of the wholly changed Villiers gave him cause to regret his reliance upon a reformation grounded on religious convictions.

THE END.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

Digitized by Google

POPULAR WORKS

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN.

COMING OUT, and THE FIELD of the FORTY FOOTSTEPS. By JANE and ANNA MARIA PORTER. In 3 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 10*s.*

By the same Authors,

TALES ROUND A WINTER HEARTH. In 2 Vols. Price 16*s.*

MISS PORTER.

DUKE CHRISTIAN of LUNEBURG; or, Traditions from the Hartz. Dedicated, by the most gracious permission, to his Majesty. In 3 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 4*s.*

THE PASTOR'S FIRESIDE. A Novel. The 2d Edition. In 4 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* bds.

THE SCOTTISH CHIEFS. A Romance. In 4 Vols. 12mo. The 5th Edition. Price 1*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* bds.

THADDEUS of WARSAW. A Novel. The 9th Edition. In 3 Vols. Price 18*s.* bds.

MISS A. M. PORTER.

HONOR O'HARA. A Novel. In 3 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 4*s.* bds.

ROCHE BLANCHE; or, The Hunters of the Pyrenees. A Romance. In 3 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 4*s.*

THE VILLAGE of MARIENDORPT. A Romance. 4 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 8*s.* bds.

THE FAST of ST. MAGDALEN. A Romance. The 2d Edition. In 3 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 1*s.* boards.

THE KNIGHT of ST. JOHN. A Romance. 3d Edition. In 3 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 1*s.* bds.

THE RECLUSE of NORWAY. 2d Edition. In 4 Vols. 12mo. Price 1*l.* 4*s.* bds.

DON SEBASTIAN; or, The House of Braganza. A Historical Romance. In 4 Vols. 12mo. Price 21*s.* bds.

THE HUNGARIAN BROTHERS. In 3 Vols. 12mo. The 4th Edition. Price 16*s.* 6*d.* bds.

SIR ETHELBERT; or, The Dissolution of the Monasteries. By the Author of "Santo Sebastiano," &c. &c. In 3 Vols. 12mo.

Digitized by Google

TALES of the WARS of OUR TIMES. By the Author of "Recollections of the Peninsula," &c. In 2 Vols. post 8vo. Price 21*s.* bds.

"His 'Recollections of the Peninsula' were among the very best descriptions of Spain's striking scenery and desperate warfare; and to pictures equally vivid, the present volumes add the interest of most touching narrative."—*Literary Gazette, May* 30. 1829.

By the same Author,

RECOLLECTIONS of the PENINSULA. 10*s.* 6*d.* bds.

SCENES and IMPRESSIONS in EGYPT. 12*s.* bds.

The STORY of a LIFE. 3d Edition. 2 Vols. post 8vo. 18*s.* bds.

NOTES and REFLECTIONS during a RAMBLE in GERMANY. New Edition. 8vo. 12*s.* bds.

SKETCHES of INDIA. 4th Edition. 8vo. 9*s.* bds.

"Such is the merit and charm of the volumes before us. They place us at once by the side of the author, and bring before our eyes and minds the scenes he has passed through, and the feelings they suggested."—*Edinburgh Review.*

GIBBON'S HISTORY of the DECLINE and FALL of the ROMAN EMPIRE; adapted to the Use of Families and Young Persons: in which the Civil, Political, and Military Transactions of the Empire are given in the powerful language of the Author; but the indecent Expressions, and all allusions of an improper tendency, have been erased. By THOMAS BOWDLER, Esq. F.R.S. &c. In 5 Vols. 8vo. Price 3*l.* 3*s.* bds.

By the same Author,

The FAMILY SHAKSPEARE; in which nothing is added to the Original Text, but those Words and Expressions are omitted which cannot with propriety be read aloud in a Family. In 10 Vols. royal 18mo. Price 3*l.* 3*s.* bds.; also in 8 Vols. 8vo. 5th Edition. Price 4*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* bds.

"We are of opinion, that it requires nothing more than a notice to bring this very meritorious publication into general circulation."—*Edinburgh Review, No.* 71.

SELECT WORKS of the BRITISH POETS; with Biographical and Critical Prefaces. By Dr. AIKIN. In 1 Vol. 8vo. 18*s.* bds. Also in 10 Vols. royal 18mo. to match the British Essayists and Novelists, 3*l.*; and in 10 Vols. post 18mo. 2*l.*

The object of this work is to comprise, within a moderate compass, a Chronological Series of our Classical Poets, from Ben Jonson to Beattie, without mutilation or abridgment, with Biographical and Critical Notices.

SELECT WORKS of the BRITISH POETS, from Chaucer to Withers. By ROB. SOUTHEY, LL.D., Poet Laureate. 1 Vol. 8vo., uniform with Aikin's Poets, *nearly ready.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.
This book is due on the last date stamped below, or on the date to which renewed.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.
13Jan'57DPX
LD 21-100m-6,'56
(B9011s10)476
General Library
University of California
Berkeley
Digitized by Google

YB 74775

Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA · LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Google